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WISDOM OF THE BRAHMIN

THE WISDOM OF THE BRAHMIN.

THE

WISDOM OF THE BRAHMIN:

A Didactic Poem.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF

FRIEDRICH RÜCKERT.

BY

CHARLES T. BROOKS.

BOOKS I.—VI.

BOSTON:
ROBERTS BROTHERS.
1882.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

PROBABLY, in proportion to the greatness of his poetic gift and work, Rückert is the least known amongst us of all the German seers and singers. More than a generation has passed since he was first introduced to the American (not to say the English) public, in the "Strung Pearls," with which that accomplished scholar and graceful translator, Nathaniel Langdon Frothingham, enriched a volume of poems from the German in Ripley's Foreign Literature. From that time he and other lovers of German poesy, beside the present writer, continued to bring forth into the light of our Western day new gems out of the same rich mine; and a treasure especially drawn upon was the vast storehouse (speaking of *pearls* one might say *ocean*) entitled "The Wisdom of the Brahmin." This volume, containing Twenty Books, the present writer entirely translated two or three years ago, and from time to time has sent out specimens, as a kind of messenger-birds, to learn the

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diamonds, a people that can raise the flowers of the Orient out of Western soil to such splendor and overshadowing fulness, may well boast of its philosophers and poets. So we need not worry ourselves with asking whence the bee gets her honey; it is she who makes it. But what is more characteristic of Rückert than the honey-cell, is the (epigrammatic) sting. Rückert himself sings: —

'Thoughts, like the fragrant breath of spring, fly everywhere;
They are not mine nor thine, — they 're floating in the air.' "

At a certain period Rückert assumed the *nom de plume* of *Freimund Reimer* (Freemouth Rhymer); and certainly not in the German language (if in any) was there ever so felicitous a master of the art of packing sententious wisdom and of pouring forth graceful feeling in lyric form. The bees might well have settled on *his* childish lips.

Rückert was born in May, 1788, and died the last day of January, 1866. One of his very last rhymed pieces was an impromptu tribute to Abraham Lincoln. Not only in the form but in the spirit of his poetic utterance Rückert was eminently versatile. His patriotism was as marked as his philological and his poetic genius. His "Geharnischte Sonnetten" (Mailed Sonnets), written at the great rising in 1813, are among the most precious possessions of the German people.

A somewhat quaint but touching account of

Rückert's last hours is given by his daughter, an extract from which the translator is tempted to insert in closing this preface: —

As on Monday, he lay in a continuous doze. I sat full of apprehension and anguish at his bedside; when, at a certain moment, opening his eyes, he looked up at me with a *roguish* smile. "Thou art like thy Hafiz to-day," I said to him. (I often teased him at such moments, only to keep myself from weeping.) "Thou art always in a kind of intoxication, and yet hast not drunk wine any more than he." — "I know it full well," he replied, "but those were right lovely dreams that I have been passing through. I was already in a heaven." — "In what one?" — "Ah, I believe I heard the murmur of the fountains of Paradise," he said with deep, full voice.

Several times he spoke of Schiller's Indian Death-Song, which was a great favorite of his, and repeated with special emphasis the lines: —

> "Wohl ihm, er ist hingegangen,
> Wo kein Schnee mehr ist."[1]

He seemed, the while, greatly comforted in his spirit. This may well have had some connection with the great influence which, particularly in the latter period of his life, the weather had upon him, so that cloudy days put him out of tune and sunshine brought back his cheerfulness. As if all nature would come into harmony with him, on the last day the sun poured down upon him a friendly glow. As I was about to draw the curtain for his protection, he remonstrated: "Let him shine full

[1] "Well with him! he has gone yonder
Where is no more snow."

upon me," said he, "perhaps he may yet make me well."

Another time he said to me: "Dost thou know — I have to-day such a primeval feeling at my heart [so *urweltlich*] — horizon, — beneath it, water — endless, formless!" — How that affrighted me! There was already the feeling of dissolution. "Father, how is it with thee?" — "Ah, quite well, child, 'Cool up to the very heart.'" [1]

So passed this sweet and sublime singer into his twofold immortality; for an immortality on earth also he has surely won in a growing circle of thoughtful and pious hearts.

C. T. B.

NEWPORT, 1882.

[1] A line from Schiller's "Fisher," "Kühl bis an's Herz hinan."

WISDOM OF THE BRAHMIN.

BOOK I.

1.

A BRAHMIN, in the fields of India born and bred,
Who never any book but Nature's Veda read;[1]
Who much has seen and thought, but more has felt and guessed;
By contemplation calmed the passions in his breast;
Speaks what he clearly sees, or would by speech make clear,
Of things more distant now, and now of things more near.
To him 't is given to look on single things alone,
Yet in each single thing to him a whole is shown.
On whatsoe'er he sees a glory glimmering,
That will he, as a bead, upon his rosary string.

[1] It will be guessed, however, from some passages in this volume, that *Nature* included *Human* nature, in its expression through books, also. — *Tr.*

2.[1]

The draught that fans the flame, a stronger draught is made;
So Passion, in its flight, from Passion borrows aid.
The wind blows up the fire, and blows it out again;
So Passion is in turn by Passion quelled and slain.
How still the candle burns when sheltered from the wind!
So burns Devotion's flame within a tranquil mind.

3.

Whom none to tremble makes, who dread in none awakes, —
Before even dreadful Death he with no terror shakes.
Whose calm and sober mind no pleasure e'er can blind,
There, where all pleasure ends, shall highest pleasure find.
Who counts, beneath the sky, man's lot, or low or high,
Easy or hard, all one, — is rich in poverty.
Who clasps love lovingly, and hates not hatred, — he,
At home in heaven, on earth his evening inn shall see.

[1] *Nir-wana* means *no wind*, and denotes a state of freedom from the agitation of restless desire. — *Tr.*

4.

Each day sweet evening's smile I joy to think of meeting,
And all night long I dream with joy of morning's greeting.
I quietly rejoice with unimpassioned zest;
'T is no impatient joy reigns in my tranquil breast.
Each day and hour I find a pleasure ever new
In little things and great, my lot and others', too.
All winter long I think upon the joys of spring;
All summer time I think what rest will autumn bring!
Year in, year out, life-long — hope brings such joy to me,
With joy I look through time out on eternity.

5.

"Good friend," my neighbor said, "thy kindness lay aside;
It keeps thee always poor." To whom I thus replied:
"The kindness I have made my pattern is divine;
And His has learned by use to wed itself to mine.
If I should lay aside my habit now, I fear
God would lay His aside, and grow from kind, severe."

6.

In water and in mire the Rose has dipped her feet;
Why, then, her cheek so red, her lips so spicy sweet?
A thirsty fungus, born of earth, her feet contain,
Which drinks the poison in with greed through every vein.
It drains off all the scum; the spirit's pure perfume,
Through her transfiguring power, shoots upward into bloom.
Heart, be not thou the sponge that earthly poison drains,
But, like the heavenly Rose, drink ether through thy veins!

7.

Remember, — what thou hast was given thee by Another,
And let thy gift pass on to bless thy needy brother.
Be like the Moon, who shines but with a borrowed light,
And keeps it not herself but lends our earthly night.
God is the Sun, who pours perpetual light that He
The world — and in the world Himself — may clearly see.

8.

The earth two mirrors holds, wherein the Sun on high,
And He, the Sun of Souls, with bliss their image spy:
The sea, when undisturbed by storms its tranquil breast, —
The soul, when every wave of passion sinks to rest.

9.

Remember that a God within thy frame doth dwell,
From each unholy thing to guard the Temple well!
Thou griev'st the indwelling God when lust usurps the throne, —
Still more when with perverse self-penance thou dost groan.
God came from heaven to look on nature through thine eyes;
His breath thy incense be for holy sacrifice!
'T is He who sees and feels and thinks and speaks in thee;
Let sight, sense, thought, and speech bright with God's glory be!

10.

As man is, so his faith ; so also is his God:
Of heavenly ether now, now of the earthly clod.
Yet twofold is his God, and so his faith twofold:
Here a new instinct's gleam, and there a tale of old.
No genius is quite free from old inherited lore,
Yet each in its own way can use the acquired store.
One tears not down the house his fathers built of old,
Yet gives its rooms the shape he best loves to behold.
Their grim old portraits, too, he puts not out of sight,
But new interprets them and sets in milder light.
So to faith's forms men give endless interpretations,
Whereby they find a home among so diverse nations.

11.

If thou should'st ask in turn Nature and History
The best report of God that each could render thee, —
In legends of old wars, of powers time out of mind,
Not one sole, sovereign God, but many, would'st thou find ;
Or, if not many, yet two Gods contending still,
Author of Good the one, the other of all Ill.
Not in the noisy world, but in thee, is it taught
That One alone is good, and He makes evil naught.

12.

I, the poor prisoner, pleased with clanking of my chain;
Blind archer, aiming still at a high mark in vain;
To spirit-natures kin, yet to the beast still bound,
Pursuing still myself, that never can be found;
Who knows not what he is, or was, or is to be, —
What were I, then, if *I* were all there is of me?
I am Thou, too, for Thou art that which is in me!
I am more than I am; my all is found in Thee.

13.

No bounds of time or space can compass God around;
Whene'er, where'er, He works, God then and there is found;
And God works all the time, and God works through all space;
Forever is His time and everywhere His place!
He is the centre, He, circumference also, —
World's End and Genesis, His breathing's ebb and flow.

14.

"A thought creates the world," thou truly sayest, but not
A thought of thine, thou fool! but one which God has thought.

Thou think'st it, yet no world arises at thy thought;
And without thought of thine the world sinks back
to naught.
The world from spirit sprang, in spirit it ascends,
And spirit is the goal to which it circling tends.
Spirit condensed in space ethereal vapor once,
And starry nebula kindled itself to suns.
The mists into the forms of air and water passed;
Slime grew to earth and stone and plant and beast
at last, —
And human form, in which man woke to consciousness
By God's enkindling breath, the primal soul to bless.

15.

What has empowered thee, Soul, from God to issue
forth?
He hath not banished thee; thou hast not *fled* to
earth.
'T was love and love alone that sent thee from
above, —
He longed so to love thee and win in turn thy love.
Wert thou not out of Him, how could'st thou seek
His rest?
Were He not out of thee, how could He be thy
guest?

16.

My ever changing self — which is, was, and shall be, —
Finds itself in Thyself, which *is* unchangeably.
For Thou art who Thou wast, Thou art who Thou shalt be;
My life from Thine streams forth to Thine eternally.
I should have lost each night the self I was, — each morn,
As one who never was till now, had I been born, —
Had I not grasped the thought that I the same must be,
Because in Thee, who art, I am eternally.

17.

I am; that proves Thou art; for this is clear to me,
I of myself am naught, am everything through Thee,
Who, as a proof of Thee, hast made me live and move,
That I Thy presence might as living witness prove, —
Might prove Thee to myself, and to the world through me,
That cannot see the proof itself contains of Thee.

18.

Once, when a boy, I saw the fruit upon the tree;
And now, when I am old, the swelling buds I see.

Man seeks what he has not: the child, the ripened fruit;
The old man seeks the bud that yearns in bloom to shoot.
Why is it that the child the ripened fruit desires?
Because he is the bud that to be fruit aspires.
Why does the old man's heart to youthful bloom so cling?
Because the ripened fruit impels new blossoming.
When has the Present's brow the Future's bloom-crown on?
When a father sees himself made young again in his son.
Praise to the Gardener's care, who nourishes the tree
Where fruit from bud, and bud from fruit, spring endlessly!

19.

A holy custom comes from far antiquity, —
The day a son is born, the father plants a tree.
So much are men and plants in instinct similar,
And yet diverse as leaf and leaf in garlands are.
The tender shoot matures beneath a favoring zone;
The child perfected is by heavenly grace alone.

The tree, once planted, grows without more care from thee;
Not without pains wilt thou thy son's improvement see.
As thou would'st have the old incline, so bend the young;
Alike of men and trees this precept wise is sung.
The tree in season yields the fruit it bears to thee;
The fruit thy son brings forth, that for himself bears he.
Yet 't is a feast of joy for thee his fruit to see,
And sweet beneath his shade one day thy sleep shall be.

20.

The story of mankind, and of each human soul,
In three short sentences canst thou sum up the whole.
At peace with nature, man on earth was but a child;
So are the blessèd still with nature reconciled.
At war with nature, man no more a child remained;
He grew a man, — gained, lost — gained, lost, — and gained and gained.
Conqueror of nature, man grows old, becomes a son
Of the new peace; and so the circle's course is run.

21.

The sling at rightful range alone its work can do;
And so the power of sense must have its limits too.

Too near the eye is found no better than too far;
Thou canst not see through self, nor yet the heavenly star.
And yet, between thyself and that faint star, there lies
A world thou canst see through, — *that* study and be wise.

22.

When first on the Sublime man's young eye gazes, awed,
In ecstasy he cries: That is the work of God!
And then, when Beauty's charm dawns on his wakened thought,
With rapturous pride he owns: By man all this is wrought.
One day, when ripe for truth, he reverently will own
'T is God works all in man, who can do naught alone.

23.

A scaling ladder leads from darkness up to light;
'T is gloomy at the foot, and at the summit, bright.
The shadow hides from thee how high up thou hast gone,
Yet climb'st thou toward the light; O Soul, climb bravely on!

When thou in light shalt know by what necessity
The darkness rose from light, the world is clear to thee.
If darkness once was light, once more 't will be light, then,
When that which has sprung forth turns to its spring again.
Each victory in man's weak spirit won by light,
Foretells the spirit-realm's clear victory over night.
That prophecy the Sun proclaims each dawning day,
Routing the hosts of night with a victorious ray.
At evening as he sinks, he burns with shame and scorn,
And sees all night in dreams the great eternal morn.

24.

What Understanding builds needs many a joist and beam;
Nature's and Fancy's work has neither joint nor seam;
The props and stays are there, only they are not seen,
And on itself that stands, that seems on naught to lean.
What thou canst comprehend stands outlined fair and well;
Beauty and greatness are incomprehensible.

25.

I scatter pearls abroad, but no one heeds or sees;
Soon I shall strew no more — then ye will gather these.
When thou hast once discerned how manifold the One,
Then is the seeming world of manifoldness gone.
The One is Two — the one and second-one are they;
The Two are One — that wars against itself for aye.
One of the Ones is here, the other One is there;
Each other's name and place alternately they share.
Look in the glass: thou there thy double wilt discern;
Now look away, and lo! two selves to one return.
The glass thy image shows; thyself the glass, I call,
That images the One Great Archetype of all.
Within His looking-glass, His glance of love sees rise
A picture-world that melts if he takes off His eyes.
Then praise the Love that holds the mirror still in view,
Where He, the One, is pleased to see Himself as two!
Oneness is twofold: here, unbroken unity, —
There, unity restored out of duality.
Centre, circumference — two; and, to complete the three,
The space between the two, divisible endlessly.

A circle — 't is a point that round itself rotates,
And orbs its house, as soul its earthly form creates.
The largest circle draw, remove it from thee far —
It shall appear to thee a point, like any star.
But take the merest point, how fine and faint soe'er,
The magnifying-glass shall swell it to a sphere.
Drop in the lake a stone, and then behold how fast
Circles from circles grow and break upon the last.
Whether the circle melt, or never rose, all 's one;
For one is all, the show of twoness being gone.
Double, is doubt, dispute, discordancy, deceit,
Twin fruit upon a twig, — bitter, at once, and sweet.
When discord concord is, and twofold singlefold,
Then will the feud be healed, that rends the world of old.

26.

Architect Nature seems to build for self alone;
Yet is her final end the spirit's, not her own.
Spirit a suckling is; Nature his nourisher,
Who rears him till he learns he did not spring from her.
The purblind Nurse would fain not let her child awake;
Through crannies in her house, light from above will break.

And as from his grub-dream awakes the butterfly,
Far over space and time Thought soars away on high;
As, when the fruit is ripe, the capsule open springs
And lets the seed fly forth, with heaven's free breeze for wings;
As from the astonished fowl escaped the duckling brood,
And far beyond her reach launched out upon the flood.

27.

Howe'er I turn thee, lo! *thou* turnest to the light
Thyself, O blossoming twig! and sham'st me with the sight;
And every shoot I set inverted in the ground,
Soon with its lower part turned up again is found.
By inner impulse urged, by outward drawing led,
Your fond look on the light is turned till life is fled.
Dark instincts, thus ye pay due honor to the light,
And only the bright soul can turn aside to night;
Yet she, while in the soil still rooted *ye* remain,
Can, as she turns to light, to light at last attain.

28.

A wonder is the world,— is never wondered through;
That overwhelms the mind and kindles it anew.

Dread overwhelms the mind at the eternal sight,
Yet fires it evermore to recommence the fight.
Darest thou to designate the many, several, small?
Or wilt thou penetrate the Great, the One, the All?
Infinity is here, infinity is there;
And thou, the finite, wilt with both the contest dare!
Ere thou hast quite explored a blade beneath thy tread,
A world of glory passed unheeded o'er thy head.
While counting twig and leaf upon the starry tree,
An earthly Spring-dream's bloom fled unenjoyed by thee.
Courage! though thou art not, yet God is all around;
In each prismatic tint the whole of light is found;
And all to worthy use the filial spirit turns,
That stirs the pious glow in which Creation burns.

29.

What is a straitened life, and what a large and free?
Within thyself is room; crowds make it close for thee.
He who from darkling self has not yet quite come out,
Feels straitened in himself; for room, must roam about.

But he whose brighter self from sense set free has been,
Finds outer space a void; his fulness is within.
Thee in the mazy crowd blind impulse sweeps along;
Only the One is much, and little is the throng.
Nay, the One is not much, — it is itself the All;
Not little is the throng, — 't is naught, not even small.
The wise man has both All and One in his *alone*,[1]
Without the All a man is but a *lonely* One.[2]

30.

Two worlds are mine: of these, if one renounced must be,
Take the great outer one, not the small one in me.
Thou wilt no longer name the world within thee small,
When once thou know'st the God in man, who dwells in all.
Narrow and small the bounds that time and space confess;
But God-embracing thought has God's own boundlessness.

[1] *All-ein*, in German.

[2] In the original: *Without the All*, *allgemein* (universal, all-common) is *common*, *mean*.

Sooner, by far, can man break every earthly strand,
Than that which draws his soul up to the higher land.
Thy body's food canst thou renounce more easily
Than do without the food that feeds the God in thee.
Blest art thou, if a breath of cunning fantasy
Melt the two worlds to one, from vapor purged and free.
Only in visible things the Invisible 's clearly seen;
They are but traces where the Invisible has been.
A world of bodied thoughts besetting thee around,
Thou feel'st a boundless sense while in the body bound.

31.

The stream, once fouled, must still flow onward for awhile,
Till its own inner tide shall clear it from the roil.
The air, by tempest shook, in cloud-steam must ferment
Until self-clarified to pure, sweet element.
So only can a soul by struggling work release,
When any outward jar, or inward, mars its peace.
Soon heals the bodily wound inflicted by a foe;
Those thy heart deals itself, long years their scars will show.

Yet if thou wrong'st thy friend, opening his wound anew, —
To do it to thyself, *that* seems inhuman, too.
Much rather the mild oil, thou hast at home in store,
Upon thy private griefs, and on thy neighbor's, pour.

32.

Thou enterest the strange world: how strange is every tree, —
Each face and creature strange; the strange space frighteneth thee.
Yet look upon the ground, made of the self-same stone,
And see the water, too, — there the same light is shown.
Then look up to the stars, they gem the self-same dome,
And learn in the strange space to feel thyself at home.
Sky, earth, and water, all shall thus enable thee
In tree, beast, — yea, even man, — familiar sights to see.
Soon Nature's strangest forms to thee made friendly are,
But man to man remains a stranger longer far.

And from the heavens alone thou learnest, and the earth,
That thy strange brother hath with thee a common birth.

33.

Thou hast two kinds of foe: one who has injured thee;
And one who at thy hand hath suffered injury.
If thou must call on one of these for help in need,
Be 't he who did, not he who suffered, the wrong deed.
The first it stands in hand his mischief to repair;
The second burns to avenge the wrong thou mad'st him bear.

34.

If one has stepped aside, dear man, forgive him, pray!
Think, thou too hast a foot, may stumble, slip, or stray.
Happy who humble grows without humiliation, —
Who, ere the world subdues, has learned self-subjugation.
The mean, when rich, is proud: when poor, he is depressed;
The noble, proud when poor, when rich is lowliest.
A wretched sight to see men climb whose natures crawl,
But wretchedest to see them totter to their fall.

Who without merit rise, win no respect thereby,
And when they fall, men look with an unpitying eye.
Who mounts the highest place will have the giddiest brain;
And each one climbs aloft, only to fall again.
Who knows his place and powers, and who conformably
To both directs his work, from just reproach is free.
Say to the vain: "As thou dost prize thyself, let me
Be prized by men, — not prize myself as they do thee!"
Honor humility, and in its honor be
Proud to the proud, and so teach pride humility.

35.

A genuine man will have two faces, and of these
The one is seen at home, the world the other sees:
The friendly face whose looks forever homeward turn;
The serious one confronts the world severe and stern.

36.

Do what thou canst, the rest leave him to do who can;
To every total work belongs a total man.
Two halves make up a whole, 'tis true; but mark thou this, —
By two things, each half done, no work completed is.

Who half and half is well, a sick man one may call;
And what we know by halves we do not know at all.
If ever so many halves would but one whole make out, —
Well! in all quarters now, halves — quarters — float about,
In every halfness lies something exaggerated,
And overdoing is with underdoing mated.
Too little and too much are each of them excess;
They miss who shoot too low — who shoots too high, no less.
Too little and too much, they both are incomplete;
In earnest and in play the golden mean is sweet.

37.

Unblest thou need'st not be, unprospered though thou art;
Fate brings prosperity, but bliss lies in the heart.
Thou think'st how fine 't would be a fortune to attain;
Think, too, how grand the power to do without that gain!
Though in thy house thou hast no treasures to impart,
Send out the golden songs thou hast within thy heart.

I give that which I have — I have, that I may give;
To give, I gather in, — by gathering in, I live.
Fain would I see the king whose liberality
Were match for mine! Come on, princes, contend with me!
For this do East and West my heart their tributes bring,
That so I may reward my subjects like a king.
Thus with his fiery wheel the sun draws water up,
And gives it back to earth, in the gemmed rainbow cup.

38.

If ill befalleth thee, count it a blessing still;
If ill thou takest it, that is a sorer ill.
Forgive thy friend if he tormenteth thee; and know
He is not well, or else he would not vex thee so.
And if Love woundeth thee, let that but spur thy love;
For, that thou hast the rose, the thorn doth surely prove.

39.

The happiness of man amounts to naught, my son;
Where one has much of it, another little or none.
Happiness must be free, like life, light, breath of heaven, —
Shared equally by all, to all men freely given.

Not riches can it be, nor power nor earthly pelf,
Which to his neighbor's loss man heaps up to himself.
Not wisdom can it be, nor art, to which the few
Alone can climb, by some rare gift enabled to.
To *be* good without grudge is the sole good of man;
For this should each man be, and he who will be, can.

40.

It well becomes a man to do whate'er he can;
What fortune still may add, depends not on the man.
If fortune conquered yield, his courage homage gains;
If he succumb to her, still blameless he remains.

41.

A luck that swiftly came may swiftly pass away;
What ripened slowlier, will that then longer stay?
Nay! in our garden here no flower has long duration;
Alone unfading blooms the flower of expectation.
Let every pleasure fade, if this remains to thee, —
The Hope that still puts forth new blossoms from the tree.

42.

Why, what the good deserve, the wicked often gain?
That question bring'st thou me, that mystery to explain?

That Gordian knot I cut in twain, nor seek to untie:
"*Not* what the good deserve the wicked gain," say I.
The Bad is prospered, when by skill a good he gains,
Which to a better man had not seemed worth the pains.
More vigilant, perchance more diligent, is he,
And so has earned the fair reward of industry.
'T is the reward of earth, and with him it shall die:
The Good alone has his forevermore on high.

43.

Sayest thou: "Virtue starves, while pampered Vice lives high?"
Hast thou, then, Virtue's worth conceived so sordidly?
Is superfluity her hire? Superfluous quite!
If Virtue idly lives, she starves with perfect right.
Bread, the reward of toil, the very villain earns
When the blue sea he ploughs or the green sod upturns.
Would'st earn it, pious man? Be brisk, if that 's thy wish!
If not, then be content with fragrance from God's dish!

44.

There still are happy men, though of them thou art not;
There 's joy upon the earth, though it be not thy lot.

And yet this joy is thine, — that so much joy can be;
And this is the one joy that none begrudges thee.

45.

Door-keeper to the heart is a man's countenance;
What welcome waits within, it tells thee in advance.
Wears it a friendly look, with hope it lights thy eyes;
If an unfriendly, hope is frightened back or flies.
Yet oft, when thou hast reached the master, it appears
The porter falsely woke in thee such hopes or fears.
Ungracious looks oft keep a gracious master's gate,
While often gracious looks on the ungracious wait.
Then let not smiles too soon thy eager hope excite,
Nor even a sulk at once put all thy hopes to flight.
But you, heart-masters, bid your servants take good heed
That none, by them deceived, your true intent misread.
Why then should Friendliness awaken hope in vain,
And sheer Unfriendliness affright her back again?
Poor, weary hopes that oft so blindly go astray,
Oh, might they see their goal e'en at the entering way!

46.

It is not bliss, O man, blest in thyself to be;
Bliss dwelleth not alone, nor yet with two or three.

Bliss maketh not its home with many, but with all;
Only the whole world's bliss my blessedness I call.
Whoso were blest and knew that others needs must mourn,
From him would his own bliss be by that knowledge torn.
And in forgetfulness can bliss be found far less;
Much rather, knowledge is the only blessedness.
And therefore can there be no bliss beneath the sun,
Because each blessèd soul is an unhappy one.
And here on earth one thought alone gives blissful rest,
That the unhappy, too, are destined to be blest.
And he who knoweth this, with zeal will do his part
To heal the woes of all, and of his private heart.
But how to heal all hearts, to none but God is known;
So He alone is blest, and thou in Him alone.

47.

When from the outer world thy senses thou hast sealed,
God's mysteries and the world's within thee are revealed.
What dissipates thy mind, that from the world take not,
Only so much of it as shall renew thy thought.

One lets a single ray through the dark chamber gleam,
When he the entire light would study in the beam;
Then fling the shutters back, to prove by open light,
No colored spectre can replace the living light.

48.

Thou art, and yet art not. Thou art — all is through
Thee:
Yet art Thou not—for Thou art not the things that be.
Thou art both that which has, and that which has not,
being,
Giving existence now — now from existence freeing.
Thou art pure light; the world's the colors sevenfold,
Which we through Thee, as if they were themselves,
behold.
The hues are not the light, 't is light we see them by;
Then are they in the light, when seemingly they die.
Thou art pure tone; the chords, sevenfold, of Nature's lyre
Divide Thee from Thyself, and build the vast world-choir.
Thou art the key-note, whence, as from a sevenfold
fount,
Bright rays dart down the scale and to their source
remount.
Thou art Thyself the sound, the Lutanist Thou art,—
Thy bearers all the waves of man's tempestuous heart.

Thou art the breath of morn, Thou art the evening's breeze.
Thou art the vernal shrub, the scent of Autumn's trees.
Thou art and art not these, like days and years Thy range, —
The self-returning ring, the never-changing change.
The riddle all unsolved I leave with awe-struck mind,
Nor seek to loose the knot with my own being twined.
My thirst for wonder comes, a Wondrous One, from Thee,
Thou, never clouded Light, with twilight quick'nest me.

49.

Thou walkest on the earth, — Spirit of Earth, — yet she,
The mother, knows Thee not, whose blooming praises Thee.
Thou standest upon suns, — Sun-spirit, — and yet he,
The Sun, perceives Thee not, whose beaming praises Thee.
Thou wavest in the air, — Spirit of Air; the free,
Fresh air perceives Thee not, whose breathing praises Thee.

Thou ridest on the waves, — the Spirit of the Sea;
The waters know Thee not whose murmuring praises Thee.
Thou dwellest in the heart, — Spirit of Purity;
The heart Thy presence owns and, loving, praises Thee!

50.

A fount flows forth from God, and back to God doth stream, —
Its influx rapturous joy, its efflux bliss supreme.
It streams in on thy soul through open gates of sense,
And forth the self-same way, and bears thee with it hence.
It streams in through the eye in light's transfiguring tide,
And as a tear of joy it wells out glorified.
It flows in through the ear, a soul-awakening strain,
And in a grateful prayer flows from the lips again.
It streams in with the Spring's perfume of Paradise,
And streams out in the breath, an incense-cloud of sighs.
It streams in as a flood of earthly, wild emotion
Upon the heart, and forth in heavenly pure devotion.
Thou feel'st that what thou art is He in thee, not thou,
And to the primal fount thou streamest upward now.

51.

I came to this retreat — how, is unknown to me;
Exiled and fugitive, constrained I came, yet free.
Came I against my will, yet willingly I stay;
If hither driven, I will not now be driven away.
Here am I rooted; oh, dislodge me not! As well
Tear from the soil the plant, the snail from out his shell.

52.

I know not now to whom I should give flowers, could I
Not twine them round the grave where darling children lie.
The mother's brow is grave; the brothers are men grown:
Unchangeable remain ye children now alone.
Each day with equal love ye take the gifts of Spring,
The gifts a father's hand loves evermore to bring.

53.

O friend, since first the gods of my being linked to thine,
Ne'er have I understood thy way as thou hast mine.

Thou, in thy way, hast learned the thing itself to
think,
And I the naked thought in images to sink.
Thou, by degrees, at length has helped me from the
dream,
Where in an inner space the things of spirit seem;
And much that once I did, because constrained there-
to,
Now with clear consciousness and high content I do.

54.

Think not I am the form your eyes before you see, —
I am the song that charms your heart with melody;
And if the song exalts and thrills your being through,
Thank God, who made me thus His instrument for
you.

55.

These wreaths are funeral weeds in sign of joys long
fled;
They, too, are deathly pale with yearning for the dead.
For every joy that died I wove in memory
A garland, and to-day they hang all over me.
Here Friendship's leaves, and there spangles of Love
that shone;
And here a father's joy, by the dark Reaper mown.

Here youth, there glory fades; and there behold! near by,
A spot is left where life's poor relics soon shall lie.
Let him who lives, when I am numbered with the dead,
A garland of dark flowers lay on my lowly bed;
And when some pilgrim seeks the empty house of clay,
Say, withered garlands: "So passes the world away!"

56.

The Echo, that thou wak'st, charms thee, O nightingale,
As Poet's heart, whose song responsive plaudits hail.
But what is the response? What, but thy voice alone?
Applaud thyself, and leave the deaf and lifeless stone!
In vain! The word has gained unmeasured power and zest,
When that of thousand hearts is echoed from thy breast.

57.

The Lily and the Rose that bloom in poesy
Are not like those that toil to bloom along our lea.

Here in our fields they toil, yet scarce, for shame, half
blows
The Lily, and for grief only half blooms the Rose.
Here in our fields they toil, yet scarce half blown, for
woe,
The Lily and the Rose of earthly glory grow.
The Lily and the Rose that but half bloom, for woe,
Are blood and water mixed, commingled fire and
snow.
The Lily and the Rose, in poesy that bloom,
Are pure white light of God, and the warm heart's
perfume.

58.

When Brahma's lofty spouse, serene Sarás-watí,
For pastime of the Gods created poesy:
"Wave, winged child," she said, "around the Gods
thy wing,
For, without thee, in heaven were life a weary thing.
And when thy potent spell their cares in sleep shall
drown,
Then shalt thou to the earth from heaven fly freely
down, —
There prattle in men's ears of Heaven's high house-
hold cheer,
But so that they with joy, not shuddering, shall hear.

Then, ere the Gods awake, returning homeward, bring
The human spirit up to heaven upon thy wing.
But this one thing observe, should'st thou successful be
In bearing up the soul of man to heaven with thee,—
With heavenly secrets thou shalt only charm his mind;
Beguile shalt thou, but not bewilder, daze, and blind;
That like transparent truths may be his waking dream,
And things as dark as night, as clear as day may seem.
The riddle's answer thou in new enigmas veil,
Which, though unsolved, the soul with mystic sense regale.
Be clear and deep and dim as heaven's unfathomed sea;
To sight show stars of light, to fancy nebulæ;
And when his eyes can bear the sight, let him behold
To constellations now the nebulæ unfold.
But as infinitude there the sublime girds round,
Let a fair finitude be thy dominion's bound.

In the immense could'st thou no certain measure trace;
With fine, not finical, art shalt thou give small things grace.
But above all, dear child, wilt thou be philosophic
In sense—in form let all be strictly rhymed and strophic.
Else will, with giant grasp, the sprite Philosophy
Into the limitless bear thee, poor Poesy!
In Choriambs, if thou wilt, dance, or in Choliambics,[1]
But flee, as thou wouldst death itself, the unrhymed Iambics.
To men a weariness, to Gods themselves a bore,
Is such a flood of words on words without a shore;
Grateful to ear and soul, sententious commonplaces,
When the syllabic fall in sweet-toned cadence paces."

59.

Playfulness is a proof of surest mastership;
Puss from her paws in play lets the doomed mousie slip.
A jest has for its aim to make unlikes agree;
Hence between friends and friends alone is jesting free.
Not with inferiors jest, — their passion you incense.
Not with superiors, they will ne'er forgive the offence.

[1] The Choriambus is —◡◡—; the Choliambic (lame Iambic) has a spondee in the sixth foot. — *Tr.*

The jest is safe that comes with earnest hand in hand, —
A shield for thee when men thy mood misunderstand.
Jesting is safe, but not with self-respect to jest,
When sense of higher worth burns in the conscious breast.
To throw one's self away a moment shames not, when
One knows he can at once assume himself again.
He who can play with pain, that man has surely won
The victory o'er himself, — or cure for him is none;
And so *Scherz* rhymes with *Schmerz*, and both of them with *Herz*,
For *smart* to *sport* alway the poet's heart converts.

60.

Each man will fit the world to his own mood and make,
And what I am to take, that I in verse must take.
If then in many a verse of mine thou findest naught,
Think, — for himself in this the poem's maker wrought.
Had I not made the verse in which thou findest naught,
Of that one which brings much to thee I had not thought.

61.

Oft is the kernel rich, though stiff the form appear;
Soft was the blade when green, here is the full-grown ear.
I paced along three halls, built in the House of Time:
Past, Present, Future — thus were named these halls sublime.
The Future in its hall showed painted tapestry,
With forms that into life seemed yearning to go free.
The Present in its hall displayed, on every side,
Forms passing into life, a multitudinous tide.
The chamber of the Past revealed to sight alone
The forms that once had life, now stiffening into stone.
Then said I: "Painting bids the Future's curtain glow;
And Sculpture represents the Past in solemn show.
'T is Poesy who stands between the other two,
Interpreting the forms the Present brings to view.
The Eternal Present — what but Nature can it be?
The Past is but a show, — a show, Futurity.
The semblance hovers round the substance, either side;
Past, Future, constantly behind each other hide,

The Present will be Past, once, in Futurity ;
The Past was Future once, when it began to be.
The Past, ere yet it was, there in the Future lay,
And all is Now, when Once and Once have flown
away.

62.

That conversation's charm may not be lost to thee
In solitude, thou there holdest self-colloquy.
Conversing with thyself has this advantage, — he
Who pleases thee shall speak, the rest thou lettest
be.
Yet has it not for that a monologue's destitution ;
There lies in thee the germ of endless evolution.
Of interlocutors a host dwells in thee, — each
Whose word might help, thou must not hinder in his
speech.

63.

No grimace so absurd but beauty's prize shall gain
From some enamored fool, or crazed, eccentric
brain.
A wight who can do naught but sob and sigh and
groan,
Lives, so he swears, in love, beauty, and truth alone.
Cobweb ideal, child of phthisicky brain, say now, —
Art thou Idalia, wretchedest idol thou

Born of the foam, we grant, the queen of loveliness,
And yet she is not foam, herself, and scum far less.
Of all insipid fools, the insipidest is he
Who is insipid from sheer finicality.
The rough may be planed down, the dull made sharp;
with one
Who has too fine a point there 's nothing to be done.

BOOK II.

1.

NAUGHT better man can do, each day in all the seven,
Than leave the world and self behind, and pray to Heaven.
Prayer is not form and show, Prayer is no empty word;
Prayer is a thought, and thought alone in Heaven is heard;
Yet Prayer must grow to work, that the whole life may rise,
Pure as a morning breath of incense, to the skies.

2.

Thou canst, of course, not find in this world clear content,
Because thy soul resides in Heaven's bright firmament.
The contrast is too vast; naught can fill up the abyss
That yawns between the thing that should be and what is.

The words thou hear'st, the looks thou daily seest, belie
The form that floats before thy soul's adoring eye,
Of what man must have been, by his celestial birth,
And yet shall be again one day upon the earth.
He whose whole heart and life are set toward this ideal
Is severed from the world, and yet her liegeman leal.
To bend her will to his is his fierce love's endeavor;
He feels he must do so, and yet must fail forever.

3.

See where, 'mid fleecy clouds, a flock by light winds driven,
Least among cloudlets white, the moon sails by in heaven,—
Pale as the others all, yet matched in size with none,
Scarce visible in day's strange kingdom of the sun;
But when she comes to mount as queen the throne of night,
Then how the pomp of clouds does homage to her light!
They beg for splendor then, far off her empire own,
And reverently form a wreath around her throne.
So he who once was lost among the ignoble ones,
When comes his time, at last leads Glory's foremost sons.

4.

Among the precious stones, that is the choicest one
Which cuts them all, yet can itself be cut by none;
But best of human hearts, is that which would from others
Far sooner bear all wounds itself, than wound a brother's.

5.

As the pure swan, who swims the pure and glassy tide,
Sees in the heaven below his mirrored image ride,
And when he long has drawn his circles in the lake
Dives down, and of his course leaves not the faintest wake, —
Blest he who keeps himself so pure on earth, and goes
So peacefully from life, men scarcely note its close.

6.

As the Sun's wheel-spokes draw earth's water to the skies,
So higher light the soul when from its cage it flies;
But as the heaviest mists to earth come back in rain,
Who knows if souls to earth make pilgrimage again?

And as the finest scents alone to ether rise,
So an ethereal soul to spirit's loftiest skies.

7.

Thou canst not look into the Sun's fire-eye intense;
In the mild moon alone hast thou such confidence.
But lo, beneath the moon the flowers their closed lids bow,
Yet lift them to the sun. Not like the flowers art thou.
When perfect as the flower's thy innocence shall be,
The sun, as now the moon, undazzled shalt thou see.

8.

Is virtue, then, a growth or full-grown purity?
To climb the height, or stand atop serene and free?
The struggle toward the height, the height of course is not;
There is the highest, where of higher is no thought.
So purity is more than all thy purifying,
And human virtue ne'er can be self-satisfying.

9.

It is a noble zeal to emulate their worth,
Who of the highest good are types upon the earth.

But this is copying a copy, at the best;
Shape thou the Archetype itself within thy breast.

10.

In our Lord's house a host of servants wait, and they
All serve the Lord, each one in his peculiar way.
The Lord's way is to let each serve Him in his own,
And which He loves the best is known to Him alone.
One only serves because his father did before,
With no mind of his own, a house-born drudge—
no more.
Another serves because to own some Lord he loves,
And this one is a Lord whom his whole heart
approves.
One ran away, but soon came back to his old place,
And him his Lord once more received into His grace.
Too lazy to desert, to stay one thought it best;
And the good Lord lets him run round beside the
rest.
One serves the Lord with zeal, before His face, and
care,
But lags behind his back, as if He saw not there.
An image of the Lord one bears before his breast,
To mind him of the Lord and of the Lord's behest.
The image he has carved of wood with cunning art,
Such favor to enjoy makes godly proud his heart.

Another bears the Lord in his heart's shrine alone,
Led by the inner star — no shape of wood or stone.
This only does the thing the Lord commands him to;
That seeks the Lord to know what He would have him do.
The third waits not to ask what are his Lord's commands;
He sees His face, and then His meaning understands.
One from self-interest serves, and one from dread and fear;
One from a loyal mind, and one from love sincere.
One serves the Lord to gain a stipulated pay;
To this the Lord adds naught, and nothing takes away.
Another serves without a stated pay; and none
The Lord long time had given, — then took him as His son.

11.

I saw Creation's Well; the Maker sat beside,
The golden bucket drew, and poured the crystal tide.
He drew and poured the dew round on the wilderness;
It bloomed a field of life in spring-flower-broidered dress.
Then brook and brooklet ran, the runnel and the rill,
Up into grass and herb, and backward faster still.

Wherever a wave rolled on, there bloomed a bride of
Spring;
And where one said Farewell, a plant was withering.
And when a green thing's form crumbled to ashes,
then
Swiftly the crystals flew to build it up again.
And still the Maker drew, yet was the well not dry,
Although sea after sea was drawn perpetually;
For every stream that from the golden bucket fell
Ran backward down below and poured into the well.

12.

Thou who didst make the world, and needed'st it no
whit,
After Thy love's designs hast thou created it,—
After Thy wisdom's plan, the purpose of Thy might.
No afterthought of man's can reach Thy forethought's
flight;
No word can speak the things Thy Word has made
outright.
Yet hast Thou reason given, man's inner light to be,
The spirit leading him, Invisible, to Thee—
The tide that yearns to sink into thy depths, O sea!
Thou standest at the gates, the Future and the
Past,—
From whom we came, to whom we all return at last.

I know not whither I go, I came I know not
whence.
From God to God I go, that is my confidence.

13.

When thou hast God within, creation's works shall be,
In all their height and depth, made manifest to thee.
Thus far, and farther not, the help of Nature goes;
She does not teach thee God, but she His pathway
shows.
The self-existent light must in thee be thine own,
Ere, mirrored thousand-fold, its radiance can be shown:
Thou must in thine own hand hold Nature's master-
key,
Before thou canst unlock her endless treasury.[1]
But tell me now how long has God within thee been?
Hast taken and put Him on? Has He to thee come
in?
Thou hast not brought Him forth, nor thought Him
out. Had He
Slept haply until now, and just awoke in thee?
The cradle thou, in which to lie he did not scorn;
He was not born of thee, He was for thee self-born.

[1] "The golden key
That opes the palace of eternity." — *Tr.*

He lends the gates to thee, which thou canst enter through,
And gives to thee the power even to exclude Him, too.
He stands and knocks, and if the door thou openest,
That power, as well, hast thou from Him alone possest.

14.

Take note : of all thy toil and strife what is the goal ?
Thou must needs satisfy the wishes of thy soul.
What is thy first desire ? That riches may be thine ?
And what the next ? Perchance on glory's roll to shine ?
But who of wealth and fame enough did ever win ?
Thy satisfaction, then, thou seekest not therein.
Or seek'st thou then perhaps to satisfy thy heart
By some perfected work of thy best thought and art ?
But when wast thou content with that which thou hadst done ?
The dream that wish awakes is an illusive one.
No way remains but this : with soul and strength to be
Devoted to the task thy God commits to thee.
Do what thou canst, 't will be enough for Him ; and thou
Shalt feel contentment, free from all illusion, now.

Then, haply, wealth and fame unsought shall still be sent;
If not, thou canst full well without them be content.

15.

Behold yon tree; no blaze of noontide dries its root,
Because, as parasol, it shadows its own foot.
It freshens and keeps cool the ground on which it stands,
Whence from the root the sap to every leaf ascends.
The root takes thoughtful care to send the strength above
That feeds the twigs by which its canopy is wove.
The twigs take grateful pains a thicker screen to weave,
To keep the root-spring fresh whence they their life receive.
So with a manly race, by mutual help that thrives;
So with each single man who for perfection strives.

16.

"Kinds never change their kind," the proverb says; why prove
No training ever made an eagle of a dove?
Yet in the bounds of kind, in the same race, the lamb
Here in a gelding ends, and there becomes a ram.

And how the training makes the very rank, one sees
In the wise management of the exemplary bees.
They raise but one queen bee (discreetly) in a hive,
For with a single head a people best can thrive;
But should disaster come upon the royal brood,
Quickly with cunning art they make the damage good.
They take another bee, child of the people — one
Meant for a mere field-hand, day-laborer in the sun;
Only enlarge the cell in which it lies, and so,
Fed with choice food, it seems as by a charm to grow.
Of a field-laborer thus a queen bee soon is made,
Acknowledged by the hordes as lineal princely head.

17.

The pearl-shell, all shut in to its own purity,
Yet shares the tint and tone of the surrounding sea.
The color of the pearl shows where it swam the flood,
In deep or shallow seas, in sea-grass or in mud;
But whether 't is oblong, oval, or perfect round,
That its shell-house decides, and not its ocean ground.
And, finally, how great or small shall be its size,
That in the inner force of its own nature lies.
Light, more or less, to man comes from the world around;
The form his station gives, the force within is found,

18.

For sifting meal we use coarse sieves and finer ones;
From each new sieve the grain, the finer, cleaner, runs.
The coarsest meal is that which in the first is caught
And that's the choicest, which the last one captures not.
Pearls too, in several sieves, both coarse and fine, men sift;
But *here* the best is that which in the first is left.
Poorer and poorer still, from sieve to sieve they passed;
Poorest of all are those that linger in the last.
If thou, then, art the pearl, greatest is best of all;
But if thou art the meal, thou canst not be too small.

19.

Black iron, when with its mass the force of fire combines,
Reddens and glows, and like a sparkling jewel shines;
Whereas the ruby, which itself is fiery red,
When heated in the flame, a palish gleam will shed.
So when the mind of man with passion's frenzy burns,
To something of strange guise its proper nature turns;

But when it is cooled off, iron again grows black,
And to its native red the carbuncle goes back.

20.

Neglecting the right word in the right place to say,
Will be a grief to thee unto thy dying day.
If afterward, in thought, thou speakest it too late,
Thy self-reproach will fall with all the heavier weight.
Yet cease not to thyself softly that word to say,
And then perhaps thou 'lt be more wise another day.

21.

How skilfully he plies his limbs, the tumbler there,
As if of steel springs made, or breathed out of the air.
And why all this? To rouse, instead of admiration,
Shuddering and fear and dread, and even detestation.
Poor tumbler! Thus his art for daily bread plies he;
Yet others do like him, with less necessity.
If misused bodily strength moves men to shuddering,
Perverted thought and wit 's a doubly shocking thing.

22.

Wisdom, in every case, begins with wondering;
Naught else sustains the soul upon her heavenward wing.

From self and from the world — godward, with yearning glow —
To soar and gaze and guess, to dive and search and know.
When thou canst see the light without its dazzling thee,
Nil admirari shall the end of wisdom be.
But to the end thy steps not yet the way have found;
Thou standest wondering still, with wonders compassed round.

23.

Were this our little earth creation's central star, —
Not, on the outer rim, a planet twinkling far, —
Man's wit more justly then its grievance might prefer,
And ask the reason why she was not perfecter.
Now, he can only ask his mother, earth, to show
What the far corner can of the bright centre know.
High on the table here a chamber candle beams,
And fills the entire room, but with unequal gleams.
Wall-mirrors, to and fro, each to the other cast
The lustrous glow, and thou standest before the last.
The light is so subdued as not to blind thee quite,
But make thy yearning eyes turn toward the fount of light.

Thou, in thy corner, wait with patience till thy gaze
Can bear to meet unblenched the central noontide
blaze,
As tender lunar light round owl-eyed blearness flows,
Till boldly to the sun an eagle's orbs unclose.
A pale white moon, O earth, thy sun at noonday is,
And endless longing wakes, itself no perfect bliss.
The sun a rainbow weaves upon the cloudy veil;
How pure the sweet accord in the chromatic scale!
But now the rainbow's tints into a second play,
Wherein the enamel bright melts to a sober gray.
Thou not the rainbow art, but faintly in its place
As a mock rainbow stand'st, its half extinguished
trace.
O man, within whose soul love and ambition wed,—
Light of the light art thou, yet shadow of the shade.

24.

The moon rolls round the earth; the earth around
the sun;
He, round a higher; and he, round a still higher one.
And so on still, and still so on forevermore,
Through boundless, endless space, a sea without a
shore?
Nay, if you will, let mind, let power be infinite,
But endlessness of space — I will not hear of it.

Outward infinity, what could thereby be meant?
With that within the mind alone, am I content.
Beyond the body's world, a world of light there lies
From which it fell, to which it seeks again to rise.
By no original light the suns flame out through space;
They shine with borrowed light, reflected from God's face.
A spirit-effluence, light, the whole creation bathes,
A raiment that each limb of the great body swathes,—
A spiritual net, of God's love-glances wove,
That binds the bodily world in meshes of His love.
Each link of the vast chain a higher one will join,
Yearning to be drawn up by energy divine,—
By light's transfiguring power to grow to mighty suns,
Whose effluence then in turn shall feed the feebler ones.
But as toward the edge of light they reach and yearn,
The last and least of them to suns one day shall turn;
And, all that on them is made ripe by solar glow,
The world shall, through and through, more and more sunny grow.
O spirit, thou must bathe thee also in this dew,
If, as a sun, thou wilt shine in this field of blue.

25.

The bodily world needs light that, like a vigorous tree,
It may unfold new forms like blossoms endlessly.
Spirits, in matter bound, gain freedom only where
The freest, toward the great deliverance, do their share.
The light, too, needs in turn the bodily world, whereby
It can alone attain to multiplicity.
For, being but one, it would as many fain appear;
That is the game it plays with this material sphere.
On every rim of cloud its sevenfold hues behold,
On bloom and fruit of trees its glory thousand-fold.
With zest it plays its game, all nature gladsomely
Lends itself to the sport, and we too share their glee.

26.

Upon life's ladder here, my peering glances meet
Nothing above my head, but much beneath my feet.
Far down below, and still in lower depths, I see
Bright swarms of busy life move onward restlessly.
But when I lift my eyes, light only meets my view;
The ladder that leads down, mounts it not upward too?
It surely mounts aloft, full surely must there be
Creatures in higher ranks, Most High, 'twixt me and Thee!

Only I see them not, so dazzled by Thy light,
Which sends its power to aid only my downward sight.
In thousand images Thine image here I spy,
Consoling me that I see not Thyself on high.

27.

"The shadow serves to enhance the splendor of the light!"
For the corporeal world your word, I own, is right;
But to the spirit-world, what can sin's shadow lend,
Which with the holy light of goodness ne'er can blend?
In impotence the light to sink exhausted seems,
When it cannot resolve the shadow in its beams.
But how could shadows, then, dissolve into the light,
When once their stubborn will is set against it quite?
Who shall untie the snarl? Take refuge in this thought:
Shadow will ne'er be light; it comes itself to naught.
Evil devours itself, and with it dies despair;
The good, pure light, remains, — evil, the shadow, where?

28.

O Earth, we stand on thee, and sing, with praise devout,
The elements that work in thee and round about:
The flood that round thee flows; the fire that through thee glows;
The wind that round thy form, like a broad mantle, blows.
So inexhaustible, so marvellous the three,—
Each well might seem the source whence all things came to be;
So that wise men, who first mused on creation's birth,
Disputed if from this or that the world sprang forth.
These said, from out the deep the world emerging came;
Those, from the ether's breath; those, from the glowing flame.
We the contending sects in easy concord bind,
And see the world bloom out from flood and fire and wind.
Whoso in nature's web the threads could sunder right,
Would find of threefold strands each woven and twisted tight.

But Nature's tapestry we would not pick apart,
On the tripartite whole content to feast the heart.

29.

Sole link that to the world henceforth attaches me,
Since from the throng of men I had the mind to flee, —
By whom from time to time the world to me is brought,
Else in my solitude I should perceive it not, —
News from the world, thou, Friend, dost faithfully impart,
But little food for thought, and naught that glads the heart.
Naught do I hear from there that can inveigle me
To quit my peaceful port and tempt once more the sea.
My outlook is o'ercast, and yet with pain I own
What makes my sky so dark is not old age alone.
A discontented race, from Providence estranged,
Would change its world, and yet would not itself be changed.
Where, though no outward war, an inward conflict burns,
The bond of gladsome life to very death-cramp turns.

From the birth-pangs of Fate abortions spring each hour,
The moment's rush and whirl all peace and joy devour.
I know not to what nook, O Science, thou shalt flee,
But dry shall be thy fount, past question, Poesy!
Where unbelief, by turns, and bigotry hold sway,
That would the soul, and this the senses, take away;
This shall not kill the mind, yet makes it a dull tool;
This shall not kill the soul, but make it a dull pool.
And in this pit of sin, this wintry frost of woe,
Hope for the world, but one — this one, new faith — I know:
Faith that the Spirit, whose eye the sun is, will, when earth
Cries loud from time to time for help, send helpers forth;
And when the misery seems past cure to human sight,
He will, in human form, Himself on earth alight.
Already oft has He come down to men forlorn,
And even now He thinks where He shall next be born.

30.

The Age's spectre-dance let flit and glimmer by;
It may amuse but, sure, cannot confuse thine eye.

Yet while thy spirit braves the maze with steadfast
brow,
Remember, there are some have weaker brains than
thou.
Increase not thou the whirl where drunken souls reel
round,
But rather show them where firm foothold can be
found.

31.

I give thee, O my son, — this shalt thou grateful
own, —
Not thoughts themselves outright, but germs of
thought alone.
Thoughts that have once been thought, no man can
think once more;
New trees cannot be made of blossoms old ones
bore.
Yet when a bud of thought thy genial soul shall hold,
Original thought of thine as blossom 't will unfold.

32.

In a strange land was I brought into slavery;
A gracious master there pitied and purchased me.
Then, when a year was past, he to his faithful slave
His freedom and, beside, two silver pieces gave.

Straightway I vowed with one my homeward fare to pay,
And gratefully in alms the other give away.
But, crossing a bazaar, I saw of birds a pair
Hung in a cage for sale, placed by their captor there.
For one released from bonds, what worthier work can be
Than to redeem the slave and set the captive free?
Yet for the two the man asked silver pieces twain,
And for my journey one I gladly would retain.
To take one piece for both the man would not agree;
Shall I then of the two buy one and set him free?
Haply they are a pair, and shall I part the twain?
Far better, then, they both as prisoners should remain.
But stubbornly the man stuck to his first demand;
I paid my pieces down, and had none left in hand.
"Who gives you meat and drink will for my wants provide;
Who points your homeward way, me to my home will guide.
But should I let you loose in the strange city here,
Where no green tree holds out safe shelter and glad cheer,
How soon ye would once more be snared by evil men,
Where haply none might come to set you free again!"

So through the city gates, and far from trodden ways,
I took them to the wood's most inaccessible maze,
And let them go; and as toward heaven on joyous wing,
They rose, between themselves I heard them say, or sing:
"How shall we recompense him who so freely spent
His all to make us free of the broad firmament?
May he a darling wife fold one day to his heart,
He who a wingèd pair not cruelly would part.
We know all roads and lanes, both town and field we know,
And gladly at his need would on his errands go;
But a substantial friend we gladlier would provide,
Who leads man by the hand through life, his dearest guide,
Dost thou not know a spot, a treasure know'st thou not,
Might give him back the means to reach that home long sought?
Beneath that dry old tree, buried in yonder field,
For ages there has lain a silver shrine concealed.
Amply will that for all his journey's needs provide,
And more, to keep at home as dowry for his bride."

They soared away, and I looked after them and thought:
"The prattle of light birds shall I regard or not?
They hover in the air, and make believe they know
All secrets that lie hid down in the earth below.
How could the vagrants see a treasure, as they said,
Who could not see the snare the crafty fowler spread?
Yet fate makes bright or blind men's eyes, for good or ill;
Mighty is fate, but God's good grace is mightier still."
In God's name, then, I go straight to the place assigned,
Begin to dig, and there the silver casket find.
I found, for my poor two, pieces enough, and more,
To build both road and bridge home to my very door;
But road and bridge, all made and laid, I found beside;
And so I only took a little for my bride.

33.

Restrain thy wrath; let Him take vengeance who knows how
To vindicate thy cause more wisely far than thou.
The unrelenting King who ne'er a fault forgave,
By pardoning one offence his life at last did save.

"How was it?" dost thou say?—I will declare to thee,
As I have found it writ in faithful history.
This king on hunting-day, with bold and reckless mood,
Revels in blood of beasts, as once in human blood.
As 'mid his train he rides, in stately hunting gear,
An arrow, flying by, just grazes his left ear.
Now will the explosive wrath of the stern King blaze high!
How will each drop of blood for bloody vengeance cry!
But no! It seemed as if that arrow in his ear
Had whispered a low word that turned his wrath to fear.
"I might," it said, "have pierced thy heart; but I forbore,
And mercifully grazed thy ear-tip—nothing more."
He took up from the grass the arrow stained with blood,
And placed within his vest that piece of holy wood.
Where is the archer now, who made the master shot,
Which in a monarch's mind such blessèd change hath wrought?
It is the stranger-youth, who would not tell his name
When first at court he served, nor yet from whence he came.

"Pay him and let him go," the King commands, "for here
Of royal vengeance he would stand in constant fear.
For this, I trow, the world not oft has seen me do, —
To pardon an offence and even reward it too."
The strange youth thanks his stars and quickly goes his way.
The King the arrow kept in memory of the day;
Whereby admonished, he firm to his purpose stood,
To mercy still inclined, and shy of shedding blood.
But lo! the hearts that once beneath his wrath were cowed,
Now, when his own relents, all mutiny aloud.
So wild the uproar grows, he flees his land at last,
But hid beneath his vest, the arrow still clings fast —
An arrow of remorse, that gnaws the exile's heart,
Yet its low voice alone has balm to soothe the smart.
In a far land at last, where every stranger found
To slavery is brought, he too is seized and bound.
In the dark palace-yard he lies, there chained all day,
Where o'er the lofty wall scarce climbs the sun's faint ray.
From far a joyous shout is borne upon the air;
He thinks upon the chase and wishes he were there.

He draws the arrow forth with sad and bodeful thought,
Which hitherto naught else but grief to him had brought.
A bird of paradise above his head sails by;
With free and careless hand he lets the arrow fly.
The shot has missed the bird, but finds a mark without
Among the happy group whence rang that joyous shout.
There stands the monarch's son in stately hunting gear,
The arrow, flying, comes and grazes his left ear.
Amazed, all cry at once: "Whence did that arrow fly?"
"From yonder palace-yard, walled in so dark and high."
"Who is confined therein?" "A stranger lately caught."
"Forthwith," commands the Prince, "hither let him be brought."
They bring him, and he thinks, now death his doom must be,
But lo, the Prince inspects the arrow carefully;
Then, holding it aloft, says to the exile now:
"Prince, in thy service once an unknown man hadst thou.

That stranger was a prince, who fled his native land,
By this bold stroke to escape his father's chastening hand.
Know me, as I know thee, by this same blood-stained dart,
Which providentially wounds both in the self-same part.
Thou would'st not take revenge, when once it pierced thy ear,
And now, all in good time, hath Heaven avenged thee here.
What fate has driven thee forth from land and realm and throne,
Come, in my father's halls, thou shalt to us make known!
There will we rest to-day, but, with a knightly train,
To-morrow to thy home escort thee back again."

34.

The Prince rode out to chase, and by a storm of rain
Was suddenly cut off from all his stately train.
Lo! what he ne'er before had dreamed of to this hour,
Helpless he finds himself beneath a Higher Power.
What now were camp and court and lordship to a worm,
Who seeks in open field a refuge from the storm?

His eyes peered far around, when, half to his delight,
Across the distant moor a hovel met his sight.
He entered that rude hut with sullen, churlish pride.
A father sat within, his daughter by his side:
The sire a stern old man, a yeoman stiff and shy;
The girl, a country child, with bashful drooping eye.
So an old mossy thorn, with prickly spines for hair,
To grace its jagged neck the loveliest rose might wear.
The Prince marks not the rose round which soft perfumes swim,
Scarce hears the voice with which the father welcomes him.
He beckons to his child, who dons her tire the while,
And serves the guest a meal, spiced with her modest smile.
The meal remains untouched, sullen and mute the guest;
He noted not the *spice*, which else had given it zest.
In that still circle he his noisy train recalls,
And in that naked hut, his golden palace halls.
The farmer's herd-boy comes home to the hut at night;
Of him the host inquires about the cattle's plight.
"The herd," he says, "was ne'er in such poor plight before;
No feed in all the land seems to content them more.

The udders all are dry; all foddering is in vain;
The lambs no drop of milk can from their mothers drain."
The old man shakes his head perplexed: "So suddenly
The udders all dried up! Who knows whence this can be?"
Up spake the daughter then: "The cause is this, I trow, —
The Prince's heart no love bears for his country now;
For as when Heaven no more its heart to earth inclines,
No herd of living man but languishes and pines, —
So when the Prince's heart turns coldly from the land
Which has been given in charge to him by Heaven's high hand."
The old man said: "What then remains, but leave behind
A land forsaken of God, another home to find?
Go, boy, and let the beasts take here their last night's rest!
And thou, my daughter, serve thy last meal for our guest.
To many a guest we here have given both meat and drink;
Let this one, too, have cause kindly of us to think."

No guest shall at our hands find meat or drink here more;
Who knows where in strange lands we may find open door?"
The Prince now looked on her, who donned her best the while,
And served him a new meal, and spiced it with her smile.
The meal remained untouched; but this time, it was not
That of his merry train and golden halls he thought:
Nay, 't was because he thought upon the word she spoke,
At which, for the first time, love in his bosom woke, —
Love for his land, with which went hand in hand, I guess,
Another, which he scarce might to himself confess.
"Woe on the pride," he said, "O heart, that fooled thee so,
And like a curse brought down an innocent home so low!
Why was it hid from me that Heaven withholds its hand,
When love weds not the hearts of princes to their land?"

He mused; just then came in the herdsman's boy once more,
And of the cattle's plight was questioned, as before.
He said: "The herd seems now in quite another mood.
The swelling udders burst, and pour a foaming flood;
The milk-pails, snowy-white, all overflowing stand;
Plainly they have no more desire to quit the land."
The old man's lifted eyes his daughter's face have sought,
Who sat in musing lost. Full well she knew his thought,
And, smiling, out she spake: "This is because, I trow,
The Prince's heart in love turns to his country now;
For, as when Heaven its heart turns kindly to the earth,
The herds of all that live partake their food with mirth,—
So when the Prince's heart turns kindly to the land
Which has been given in charge to him by Heaven's high hand."
Then out the old farmer spake: "To Heaven due praises pay,
That with such timely grace hath blessed the land to-day!

We shall not now be forced from our loved land to fare.
But to the Prince's ear, who then our thanks shall bear?
I plainly see, O guest, — as from thy raiment now
The rain has dried away, — of noble rank art thou.
To-morrow bear our word with thee to princely halls;
But take thy rest to-day within a peasant's walls."

35.

A nobleman as guest came to another's gate,
And on a flying leaf sent in this card of state:
"Is entrance granted me? I come, as comes the feather
And sails away again in the light summer weather."
Then came the answer out: "We give thee not the right
To enter at our gate; thou mak'st thyself too light."
Then went the message in: "I come as comes the stone,
Which, tossed into the sea, lies quiet where 't was thrown."
Then came the answer forth: "We never can allow
Thy entrance at our gate; too heavy far art thou."

Then went the message in: "I come as mounted men,
Who, when their errand 's done, mount and ride on again."
Then he within called out: "That word I like the best.
Porter, fling wide the gate to such a noble guest!"

36.

Far in the Southern seas, on islands, dwells a race,
Rich in content, and pure from evil's faintest trace.
The islands in a group stretch like a garland round;
Separate, distinct, they lie, — sundered, yet closely bound.
On every isle a small and peaceful people dwell;
All from one sire have sprung, no legend needs to tell.
And over all of them holds rule the island Queen;
No armèd host has she, and peaceful is her mien.
And peaceful is the mind her subject-peoples bear;
No war-flag fires their blood, nor glory's trumpet-blare.
Their weapons are their prayers, — their glory, songs and psalms,
In Nature's temple sung beneath the spreading palms.

The palms their roof-tree form; in palm-leaves dressed they stand;
And palm-trees drop the fruit as food into their hand.
This fruit contains within oil, milk, and hydromel,
Which makes man's spirit gay, and keeps him always well.
As is the life of man, so is the palm-tree's there;
They live a hundred years, and fruit each month they bear.
When, hollow with old age, a trunk falls by the sand,
They use it for a skiff, to coast from strand to strand.
And then they need no oar, no rudder, mast, nor sails;
Along that crystal flood breathe ever favoring gales.
When they would take a gift, the guest's kind heart to show,
They need but reach and pluck sea-corals as they go,
Which under water pale in tender clusters grow,
But, hardening in the air, to brilliant colors glow.
For money, they use none, but gathered shells that lay,
And borrowed on the beach bright hues from noon-tide's ray.
But as they wage no war themselves, at times from far
Come strangers to their shores to play the game of war.

Pirates come cruising round, shiploads of warlike troops,
Through the sea-passages of the Peace Island-groups.
But all their fighting ends in fights among themselves;
They never touch the goods upon the island-shelves;
For they have heard and so believe, as well they might:
On him who should touch *them* the curse of Heaven would light.
This creed alone has kept the island-peoples free,
Who else, unarmed, had been consigned to slavery.
But when a seaman comes — a peaceful one — to land,
Gladly the island maid in marriage gives her hand.
Then comes the roving fit, and calmly he, I wis,
Leaves wife and child behind, his briefly tasted bliss.
For, an adopted land men leave, and scarcely mourn, —
But with sore pain the land where they were bred and born.
The seaman carries home, when skies and seas are clear,
The tale that none believe, yet all delight to hear.

37.

A certain King had once — the legend tells us — stored
Within his palace-walls of books the hugest hoard.

And when he journeyed round, a hundred camels strode,
Each bearing on his back a literary load.
At last he grew aware — how could he fail to be? —
'T was cumb'rous journeying with such a bookery.
So, for convenience' sake, he had a hundred sages
A travelling library extract from all these pages.
Of these, again, was made an abstract, which when he
Went journeying, one stout mule could carry easily.
But he must have his things more snugly packed, he said,
And of the abstract they another abstract made.
In one small volume now the mule's load was comprised,
Which in his hand the King could bear uncompromised.
Yet was it still for him a burden somewhat sore;
The abstract's abstract now they must abstract once more.
So from the extract-book they set themselves to extract
One sentence as its pith, short, simple, and compact.
This could he comprehend, and easily retain,
And by it guide his soul and regulate his reign.
Did he succeed in this? If not, it must be laid
To this, — that he himself the abstract had not made.

But this is certain : thou, for thy salvation's sake,
Must from the waste of books thyself such abstract make.

38.

The post assigned to thee, fail not to understand,
Nor sunder heaven and earth with a presumptuous hand.
For both God placed thee here : the fight of earth to wage ;
And still toward heavenly peace pursue thy pilgrimage.
Whoso seeks idle peace for private ends alone,
A traitor to the world's great commonwealth is shown.
To further human weal with all thy power below,
No sacrifice too great, save peace of soul, I know.
But let no power compel, no glory blind thine eyes, —
Nor Love tempt thee to make to her this sacrifice.
This no self-seeking is, — shirking things hard to do ;
To thine eternal self, thy work is, to be true.

BOOK III.

1.

Now flies the swallow hence, and after her the Summer;
Waits a fair Autumn there, — then welcome the newcomer!
So he who yet no share in the year's pleasure took,
May now enjoy until stern Winter shuts the book.

2.

There will I let them hang, all the long winter through,
My withered wreaths, till Spring the blossoms wakes anew, —
Not only as a sign of joys bloomed out and gone,
But as a pledge to hope of joys still coming on.

3.

A little longer yet, a glad and patient mood, —
Then shall all dark be bright, all evil turn to good.

E'en now soft gleams break out, the gloomy clouds betwixt;
E'en now a foretaste sweet is with the bitter mixt.
If still the shadow wanes, and light comes sure but slow,
Though heavy falls the shade and feeble still the glow, —
A little longer yet, a glad and patient mood!
Soon shall all dark be bright, all evil turn to good.

4.

The days, the precious days; we gladly let them fly,
That still more precious fruit may ripen by and by:
A rare and wondrous plant that shall bloom out some night, —
A child we're training up, a book we long to write.

5.

How high or low thou art — *that* solves not all thy thinking;
But *feeling* tells if thou art rising now or sinking.
Sinking, thou feel'st thy weight; rising, thy buoyancy;
There, by thyself opprest — here, from all pressure free.

This note and heed meanwhile: freely canst thou, my friend,
From lowest depth mount up, from loftiest height descend.

6.

The world's great reckoning-book contains and keeps in it
What we enjoy, profess, and love — all fairly writ.
How long a time to enjoy is here to each assigned,
He knows, Who has the Book all written in His mind.

7.

Where in the land and how to dwell, thou askest, friend,
That thou may'st reach the bliss of man, life's aim and end?
Dwell under heaven's broad roof, on turf, in green self-drest,
And rest in full content on Nature's bounteous breast.
Dwell in the well-tilled field, where Nature on thee waits,
And honest toil enjoys the fulness it creates.
Dwell in the populous town where stirs a busy life;
Act and be acted on, in mutual human strife.

Dwell in the wilderness, where foot of man ne'er trod,
Where Nature rests from work; live to thyself and God.
Dwell wheresoe'er thou may'st, thou still canst bide and be
A man, and here or there do all things humanly.

8.

With glory and renown the heart is never sated;
'T is surfeited and sick, long ere 't is satiated.
They say the ear-drum rings, when fame thy praises sings;[1]
But a weak stupor 't is, when of itself it rings.
Let neither this nor that wake in thy ear such roar,
But tranquil peace within thy bosom shut her door.

9.

Men's praise or blame makes not thy true nobility;
Yet better than half praise is hearty blame for thee.
Blame is a spur to thee which, as just blame, thou prizest;
The unjust harms thee not, which justly thou despisest.

[1] Popular superstition: "When your ear burns, somebody is talking about you." — *Tr.*

But bald, flat praise, as if for sop of riddance meant,
That is a crumb which none but beggars can content.

10.

"Why cravest thou more wealth, more fame than thou hast now?
Will they increase thy heart's true welfare, thinkest thou?"
Wealth, fame, I seek them not to glut myself therein;
I seek them but as means my soul's high end to win:
To make the weapons bright and sharp, of consciousness,
The Beautiful, my joy, more clearly to express.

11.

Not at the swallow's song who Summer's message brings,
And of eternal youth and world-renewal sings,
Such thrill of joy I feel as a friend's greeting gives,
Who brings me that one thing by which alone man lives.
That world-show vanisheth; that heart's love knows no death;
This blows upon my heart with more than Springtime's breath.

12.

What inly seizes thee, let ripen by degrees:
What glides by outwardly, that must thou quickly seize.
What is not seized at once, is lost to thee forever;
What in thy soul grows ripe, is born to perish never.

13.

Why goest thou from thyself out in the world of men?
To come back from the whirl to thine own peace again.
And why from that world's whirl comest thou back to this?
To think out, for the world, in silence thoughts of bliss.
Blest art thou if the world gives thee what thou canst use,
And if these thoughts of thine the world shall not refuse.

14.

As the cured sick man feels full bliss of health at last,
Then only when he thinks upon the sickness past,—

Rejoiced that life's full tide once more flows freely on,
All hindrances henceforth, he hopes, forever gone;
So, too, the man who thinks on sins and errors past,
Whence God has led him forth to the right way at last.
Right gladly can he now pursue the rightful track,
Strongly resolved that he will never more turn back.
Yet as the cured one feels the memory of past pain
Whisper a warning low, then die away again;
So he who sadly thinks on sins and errors past,
Only his backward glance with keener pang is cast.
For difference vast it makes in what one has to bear,
Whether or no his fault has in his fate a share.

15.

When courage faileth thee, thy power to work fails too;
The nerveless, crippled arm no more its task can do.
When courage once revives within the fainting heart,
Then will the quickened shoot to wild luxuriance start.
Then daily pray to God that He, as wise as good,
Will keep thee from the weak, and from the wilful mood.

16.

A Paradise never lost, account far less, O men,
Than a lost Paradise entreated back again.
Believe me, for I say the first *is* lost to you;
The other, when ye will, is born in you anew.
Else would I ne'er advise, were it not lost before,
That you should lose it now, to get it back once more.

17.

To be what thou art not, what thou art meant to be,
That which thou should'st and canst, — scant space earth giveth thee.
The task is infinite, so from this finite earth
Into the infinite beyond it stretches forth!
Good cheer! What here thou dost, yonder with thee shall go:
And what that world completes, must be begun below.

18.

Stand not aloof from where men meet to worship, proud
That thou canst pray alone as well as in a crowd.
True, God is everywhere, and in the crowd thou art
No nearer Him, unless thou heed'st Him in thy heart.

Yet, in a common flame if many fagots burn,
By the intenser glow thy senses well discern.

19.

Shame on thee, that thou hast firm in thy hand not yet
The bridle, nor thy foot firm in the stirrup set!
Shame, that the saddle proves so loose a seat to thee,
Tossed by the headstrong steed of passion endlessly!

20.

Do good and speak the truth, thou *must.* To rack thy brain
About the reason *why,* were labor spent in vain.
I know no other way; wilt thou, or nilt, thou must.
Well for thee if the right with heartfelt joy thou dost.

21.

What others do thou need'st not always understand,
That thou may'st ably do the work thou hast in hand.
Yet with twofold success and joy thy labor fares,
If, while thou dost thy work, thou understandest theirs.

22.

Against the ungenial world thou utterest loud complaints;
Thou canst not bear, thou say'st, society's restraints.
Thou seek'st the wilderness, to fly from man—and lo!
He clings to thee e'en there, and will not let thee go.
But if thou must thyself endure and tolerate,
Why from thy image then would'st thou be separate?
With Nature thou canst feel far more in unison,
Because thou dost not ask her path thy way to run.
Thou wilt prescribe *thy* way to men, and men alone,
Forgetting that, like thee, each of them is his own.
Frost, rain, hail, storm, and wind thou bearest patiently;
Man's waywardness alone annoys and angers thee?
The man who refuge seeks in flight from life's restraint
Is like the child who flees parental chastisement;
Who through all bogs and briers of trouble plunges in,
To take revenge (he thinks) on hated discipline.
Life's limits the true man will own and honor, too,
And to that knowledge feel his freedom to be due.
Action, his inner store, still to increase he strives;
Suffering, an outward thing, he bravely from him drives.

Yet even suffering he can change to action, too,
When, acting humanly, he leads men to so do;
For Passion only 't is that makes men disagree;
Only in Reason lies the strength of unity.
Man's problem is, to train and to debarbarize
Himself, and help his race in culture's scale to rise.

23.

If pleased with what is done, then gladly rest therein;
And if it please thee not, then something new begin;
Yet let not what is done please thee beyond due bound,
For genuine joy alone is in fresh action found.

24.

'T is not enough the thing clearly to understand;
Know it by heart thou must, to practise it off-hand.
Hast it at thy tongue's end, to understand the thing
No need — as thou may'st see in the art of reckoning.
For in the noble art of reckoning, as we see,
Perfection best is gained, when one from thought is free.

25.

Thou seest how easily with one things go off-hand,
Which thou must rack thy brain long time to understand;

While thou so nimbly deal'st with things of which his brain,
With all its agonies, a notion scarce can gain.
Then either, if thine own exploits thou prizest so,
Set not the accomplishments of other men too low;
Or, if their doing thou so very cheaply rate,
Hold not thy doing, then, as anything so great.

26.

Thou canst not see grass grow, how sharp soe'er thou be,
Yet that the grass has grown, thou very soon canst see;
So, though thou canst not see thy work now prospering, — know,
The print of every work time without fail shall show.

27.

Happy the man, not left to form himself complete,
Whom earlier models lend their traits by usage sweet.
A father he has known, a teacher has he found,
To whom by ties of love his pliant heart is bound, —
To whom he clings and climbs, by whom, unconscious, grows,
And so is good and strong and noble ere he knows.

And then, when Duty speaks, he has but this to do:
Continue consciously, as he, unconscious, grew.

28.

If rightly to the mark my leader thou wilt be,
Thou shalt not go too slow, nor yet too fast for me.
Thou shalt not hold too much discourse upon the way,
Lest we forget the end, or from the pathway stray.
Make short for me the road, and light and clear and free, —
Not hard, to make thyself the needfuller to me;
For time will come when I my guide shall have outgrown,
And I would learn of thee to go my way alone.

29.

Self-interest is, with most, the source of gratitude
For whatsoe'er thou dost, or hast done, for their good;
Yet thy best recompense is gratitude so born,
Which thou with gratitude should'st take, and not with scorn.
Be thankful for the thanks which even self-interest brings,
That from so base a soil a shoot so noble springs.

30.

From one devoid of good, some good may one day grow;
One who is turned away, can never rightwise go.
Thou buildest up false things upon a false foundation.
Thou canst, O misformed man, have no true cultivation.

31.

When thou with Nature feel'st a balance in thy soul,
Thou dost no longer doubt the world a perfect whole;
The balance once disturbed, doubt well may rise in thee;
The elements themselves against thee mutiny.
Yet must the human soul keep all its weapons bright,
With seasons and with climes to wage a strenuous fight.
And evermore the world a perfect thing is wrought,
Though the perfection comes at last from human thought;
For to this very end, the whole included man,
That man's mind might complete and crown the mighty plan.

32.

I honor him who strives and struggles toward the ideal;
I honor him no less who prospers in the real.
But him I love, who, with divine impartiality,
Highest ideal weds to realest reality.[1]

33.

By many-sidedness the crystal charms the sight;
Therein the broken ray plays with a live delight.
Yet in its way and place one-sidedness is good;
The joy of the blue sky is the lake's glassy flood.

34.

I.

Perfection is an end that mocks approach indeed,
But one that must be sought by struggling, not by speed.

II.

One forward step, that gains sure foothold on the track,
Is worth two steps ahead, where one slides three steps back.

[1] I have not ventured to attempt to match Rückert's *Wirklichstkeit* (Realest-ity !). —*Tr.*

III.

When once you think no more how far you 're on your way,
The journey is half o'er; the rest is merely play.

IV.

He finds, who seeks — 't is true; only not he who, blind,
Seeks where not even God's eyes the thing he seeks could find.

V.

Where thou know'st not the way, there take a guide to thee.
But does the guide himself know it? Be sure and see!

VI.

New sandals pinch the feet, — grown easy, they 're all torn;
When once you get things right, their loss you have to mourn.

VII.

The word has magic power, it brings the matter forth;
Take heed, then, not to give a bad thing oral birth.

VIII.

Once give thy sorrow words — thou art relieved of it;
Once give thy pleasure words — thou art bereaved of it.

IX.

Who makes his promise loud and strong as mouth
can make it,
Gives proof to thee, thereby, he has a mind to break it.

X.

He who lies once, a course of falsehood has begun,
For seven lies it takes to keep in countenance one.

XI.

The serpent in his tooth, the scorpion in his tail,
His poison keeps, — but man's from all parts will
assail.

XII.

Who sees the fruit, its tree can readily declare;
The gardener sees the tree and knows what fruit 'twill
bear.

XIII.

Say not of any man behind his back a thing
Which you before his face would shrink from uttering.

XIV.

Offence cannot be given unless one takes the offence;
If thrown down at thy feet, thou need'st not lift it
thence.

XV.

O King, if thou wilt not in this world favor me,
Thy favor in the next will help nor me nor thee.

XVI.

The dog will wag and whine to coax from thee his meat;
The noble steed must thou caress and coax to eat.

XVII.

Where beggars are ashamed to ask, or even receive,
Must not the bounteous be no less ashamed to give?

XVIII.

Who sleeps, no hunger knows; alas for that poor wight
Who cannot close his eyes, for hunger, all the night.

XIX.

A wretched set of keys that open but not close;
Soon wilt thou be starved out with such poor keys as those!

XX.

The wife can carry out, in her small apron, more
Than in his cart the man can wheel in at the door.

XXI.

What is esteemed in man, in woman is despised;
The hen that like the cock will crow, is sacrificed.[1]

[1] "Whistling girls and crowing hens
Never come to happy ends." — *Old Song.*

XXII.

If a great good thou hast, crave not the little one;
Need'st thou the torch's glare when shines the noon-day sun?

XXIII.

What thou art used to, soon thy heart will hanker for 't;
Accustom not thy child to evil, even in sport.

XXIV.

He innocently errs who knows not the right way,—
Not he who sees the road, but in the wood will stray.

XXV.

No man more wofully wanders in error's night,
Than he who wilfully forsakes the path of right.

XXVI.

An unembarrassed mind another's track can use;
A self-embarrassed soul its own will oft confuse.

XXVII.

Learn patience from the earth, thy field and dwelling-place;
The plough tears through her heart, and she repays 't with grace.

XXVIII.

Revenge a rapture is that may live out the day,
But magnanimity a bliss that lasts for aye.

XXIX.

Modesty is a dress that doth all men beseem,
But doubly him who had most cause for self-esteem.

35.

From tyrannous Time had I sought refuge as he passed,
And from his storms had found a sheltering rest at last.
I set my house to rights, and snugly closed the door,
And let mad Time meanwhile outside still rave and roar.
I thought: I 've staid behind, and Time has gone far by;
When lo! I found 't was Time had staid behind, not I.
What is there back of him, from which his flight he takes;
What is there out of him, which he forever seeks?

36.

There a broad gateway lies, a narrow door beside:
Through this, one goes on foot; through that they drive and ride.

The road is thronged; to-day all dust, and dung
to-morrow;
The door is sure and safe, albeit low and narrow.
To stoop and squeeze can be no great annoyance,
sure;
Only to stoop and squeeze I never could endure.
And as I through the door pass in and out each day,
I, fool, still choose the broad and not the narrow
way.
I feel as if some harm on me that day would break,
When through the narrow yoke I pass with bended
neck;
And every time I seem to have escaped that day,
When I have crowded through the broad and miry
way,
Thou say'st, 't is nonsense all, and superstition. True;
And yet for me it has a grain of blessing too.
For no more, out or in, I go now thoughtlessly;
My folly on the way always occurs to me.
The man is wise who knows his folly, and the
power
With which men's feet are led by Folly every
hour.
When thou with Folly's might no longer canst
contend,
Thou canst at least to her a touch of wisdom lend.

37.

I daily saw a man whose name I did not know;
I always meant to ask and still neglected to.
Meanwhile I heard a name oft named familiarly;
But ne'er could see the man whose name it chanced to be.
Curious enough, was I, the oft named man to view,—
Curious to learn his name whose face so well I knew.
I find at last that name, this man, are both the same,
And now I care no more for either man or name.

38.

They heaped upon me praise; their very praises shamed me.
They heaped upon me blame; and in my courage lamed me.
Either both praise and blame they gave in some wrong way,
Or else I took them wrong; but which I cannot say.
Both praise and blame, by right, a strengthening sense should leave,
That something has been gained, and more is to achieve.

39.

I know not what the world, meanwhile, has seen and done,
But weighty things, no doubt, have been beneath the sun.
Only no one of them has reached my eye or ear;
No faintest sign thereof have I detected here.
And yet they have gone on, although I knew it not,
And made, though unperceived, my world or cold or hot.
For the great body naught can touch in any part,
But sympathetic pangs through all the members dart;
And could I only read my heart's true looking-glass,
I there should see the world and all that comes to pass.
Now I must wait till fame and the gazette, at last,
Bring to my ear and eye the news of what is passed,
That with the weal and woe I may rejoice or weep,
Which have befall'n the world the while I lay asleep.

40.

The hours and days, as they with changeful mood go by,
Tempt thee to rate thy work too low, or all too high.

Let not those evil sprites, the proud, the spiritless,
O'ermaster in thy soul the genuine lowliness.
The highest self-respect consists with modesty;
O instrument of God, He does the work through thee!

41.

In highways and in byways, thou shalt be seen with none
But only honorable and honored folk, my son.
Half of the honor's thine, when men before them fall,
And thou wilt, by and by, learn to deserve it all.

42.

Devoutly I looked up to see the rain fall fast,
That comes, long craved, to cheer the thirsting world at last.
I always for myself have had enough to drink,
But naught could slake my thirst while on the world's I think;
But now, for very thirst, though all in silence drank,
In their name and my own must I the Father thank.

43.

Ye hills, beneath whose breast I laid my loved and blest,
They are not wholly lost, for still ye guard their rest.

What is the might of Death? When flowers of sweetest breath,
Where I had never dreamed, fair Spring awakeneth?
What 's lost forevermore, when Love's hand carpets o'er,
With green and bloom, a spot dreary and bare before?

44.

I cannot from my house upward or downward go,
But two lost children walk beside me to and fro;
For upward from my door there lies a ditch, whose brink
I never can approach, to cross it, but I think
How, the last time, with them along this way I came,
When Death in both e'en now had lit his hidden flame.
For children's little feet the ditch was far too wide,
Yet they no danger feared, with Father for a guide.
I lifted them across, and thought o'er each abyss
Henceforth to bear them safe, as I had done o'er this.
It brought not then to mind *one* deep and dreary pit,
As now it always does since they were laid in it.
But downward from the house, if I would take my way,
There is the pavement where the hearse-wheels rolled one day.

That rumble still I hear, and seem to see the track,
Though many a one has since gone rumbling forth and back.
But pass whatever may, naught can wipe out that trace;
And still I tread that track, which time shall ne'er efface.

45.

I never on my bed my nightly slumber seek,
Till with my hand I feel my little darling's cheek;
And when I, in the dark, have felt his flesh, — to *see*
His face I do not need — the touch suffices me.
I know full well that touch no good to *him* will do,
Unless a better Power guards him the long night through;
Yet should I once refrain, my fancy makes me fear,
For evil powers to work, the way would then be clear;
And if my child, natheless, had slept on safely still,
Yet I myself, meanwhile, had slept that night but ill.

46.

What dost thou say to me? Thou 'lt surely speak once more
A word to me from there, where thou hast gone before!

With speaking looks dost thou, O Sister Spirit, stand
Before my eyes, as once thou trod'st this earthly land!
The well-known features still, the tones I loved to hear,
Though softened to the sense, less loud upon the ear;
Yet making clear that thou, contented with thy lot,
To sympathize with mine, e'en there forgettest not.
Thou lettest me, too, share, by sympathy, thy bliss,
Peace-wafted to thy world, as thou hast been to this.

47.

Be to thy friend a friend — that's Friendship's law for thee;
It is not in the bond, *his* friend *thy* friend shall be.
That he with one hand takes thee, with the other me,
Forms no immediate bond between myself and thee.
But his *foe's* friend to be I cannot tolerate,
For none can love the one he knows his friend to hate.

48.

A miser who surveys his gold with gloating eyes,
And worships toward the shrine wherein his treasure lies,

Who of his goods enjoys naught else except the view, —
Reopening still the chest, only to shut it to, —
Is wiser still by far than many a man, called wise,
Who has a nobler gained than any golden prize.
A living treasure he has gained of flesh and blood,
Yet ever from the sight thereof derives no good.
The children God has given, what good to thee are they,
If thou from them thine eyes, indifferent, turn'st away?
If seldom with pure joy their forms thine eyes behold,
And scarcely look at them save to command or scold?

49.

Around me in the house a still and busy stir,
My musing thoughts do much to vacancy prefer.
The little Maker, Mind, contentment feels therein,
As the great Maker, midst the world's melodious din.
But one sharp cry, the dream creative disappears,
And all is over now with harmony of the spheres.

50.

Woman, as wife to man, for this has Nature sent,
That spirit may be made by body's help content;

The spirit, having paid toll at the sense's door,
May through its realms henceforth all unobstructed soar.
While he within the world of mind life's fruit matures,
She against outward storm his inward work ensures;
And thus what he works out, she too has jointly wrought,
While she has lived for him, while he for her has thought.
What school taught *me* to teach this lesson, askest thou?
My spring of love[1] has borne its wisdom's harvest now.

51.

A friend came home, of whom for years I had not heard;
Nor had he heard of me in all that time one word.
He came and went, and still he learned not much of me,
Because himself was all he let me hear or see.
'T was plain he little cared about my life to learn, —
To tell about his own, that was his chief concern;
So what he got from me in truth was simply naught,
And I from him so much as I could use have caught.

[1] Allusion to the author's book called "Liebesfruhling." — *Tr.*

52.

A wretched business 't is, and one which ne'er can thrive,
When none will simply stick to that he ought to drive;
When each neglects his work, at other men's to peep,
This one will not drive goats because that one drives sheep;
Will not tend shop because that other tends a mill;
Or drive a coach, because his neighbor drives a quill;
Or because *he* grinds paints, refuses to grind corn;
Or to keep books, because *he* to *make* books is born.
Where other men go high, still higher he would go;
Where others are atop, he will not stay below.
A wretched business that, and one that ne'er can thrive;
No thrift is in the land, when thus their work they drive.

53.

Of Innocence and Peace, once has been seen the reign,
And sick Humanity shall hail it once again.
In far futurity, as in the past, the bliss
Of that bright age gleams out to cheer the woe of this.

Yes, once that kingdom was, and yet will come again:
In Heaven or on the Earth? No doubt can, else remain.
Up yonder, 't were enough for my own piety;
But I could wish it here for them that follow me.

54.

That high above thy reach soars unattainably
The type of Good and Fair — should that discourage thee?
It should encourage thee and keep the fire alive;
It stands too high, that thou may'st ever higher strive.

55.

Six little words lay claim to me each passing day:
I *ought*, I *must*, I *can*, I *will*, I *dare*, I *may*.
I Ought: that is the law God on my heart has written,
The mark for which my soul is with strong yearning smitten.
I Must: that is the bound set either side the way
By Nature and the World, so that I shall not stray.
I Can: that measures out the power intrusted me
Of action, knowledge, art, skill, and dexterity.

I Will: no higher crown on human head can rest;
'T is Freedom's signet seal upon the soul impressed
I Dare, is the device which on the seal you read,
By Freedom's open door a bolt for time of need.
I May, among them all hovers uncertainly;
The moment must at last decide what it shall be.
I ought, I must, I can, I will, I dare, I may:
The six lay claim to me each hour of every day.
Teach me, O God! and then, then shall I know, each day,
That which I ought to do, must, can, will, dare, and may.

56.

Infinite in thyself, yet finite outwardly,
A mystery to thyself, thou feel'st thyself to be.
But understand! What seem past reconciling quite,—
Finite and Infinite,—yet at one point unite.
Thou art not yet become, but ever going to be,
And in all growth there lies self-contrariety.
Infinite, while it grows, must yet as finite show,
Finite, unfolding still, to infinite will grow.

57.

"Why is the one great self, the whole humanity,
Torn into little selves, conflicting endlessly?"

That these in discord part, not meet in unison,
Charge to the single souls that all have sprung from one, —
Who in their singleness keep not the unity,
As all the blossoms help make up the blooming tree.
For so should they who own one soul-enkindling glow,
Into each other flame, yet not confounded flow, —
A many-branching tree of universal reason,
One mind's harmonious thoughts creating in their season;
Where, of itself, each thought would be a ray divine,
But not a light, till all in unison should shine.
Some faint approach to this he makes whose mind has caught,
By strong reflective power, what earlier minds had thought, —
Who thinks the thoughts men still shall think when he is gone,
Who every form of thought into himself has drawn.
Snarls of conflicting minds his genius looseneth,
As wood and field dissolve in Springtime's fragrant breath.

58.

Thou art, O man, but half what Nature at thy birth
Made thee, — and half what thou hast made thyself on earth.
She laid the building-ground thou canst not change one jot;
'T is thine to build thereon a shapely house, or not.
To *that* thou canst do naught, — with *this* hast all to do;
Thou need'st not rust nor rest, with this great work in view.
Rest not till thou hast made right what is wrong in thee, —
And what is false and weak, made true and strong in thee.
This cannot be too soon, nor yet too late begun;
The making of a man 's a work that 's never done.

59.

Who 's blest? Who thinks he is. — Unblest? Who so believes.
Belief bestows the world, and of the world bereaves, —
Now strengthening the weak, the strong now palsying,
A beggar this it makes, the other makes a king.

Earth ministers to Faith, yet fills not her desires,
For she alone to Heaven successfully aspires.
Before the face of God she boldly comes to stand,
And knows in judgment she shall bide at His right hand.

60.

Things — dost thou play with them, or do they play with thee?
For mutual make-believes ye truly seem to be.
One moment thou as true a thing wilt justify,
Which the next moment thou as falsehood wilt deny.
Which is it of the two? or is it both, perchance?
Or haply each by turns in being's changeful dance?
In thee the two exist, with ever shifting show;
What is it, then, in thee, that calls them so or so?
The Changeable in thee, *that* changes everything;
Where is the Permanent that all to rest shall bring?
That Permanent can be the Eternal One, naught else,
Before whose face Truth stands, and Show to nothing melts.
Before this judgment-seat be all things earthly brought;
All's true that it sustains, all's false that it does not.

61.

That thou in the same stream not twice thy limbs canst lave,
Because each moment brings a new and different wave;
And that thou too, as well, not to thyself more true,
At every moment art a different man and new:
The wise man who said this, was he, too, dost thou deem,
A weak and changeful thing, and fickle as the stream?
Nay, he was firm and fixed, maintaining steadfastly,
Immovably, that all was movable but he.
Immutable himself, all else he counted mutable,
Nor cared to think, if he might haply be refutable.

62.

That such imperfect thoughts of heavenly spheres can find
A cherished dwelling-place and lodgment in thy mind,
And yet, thou in thy sphere, so perfect be and true, —
How little what we know determines what we do!
He rightly knows the world, who in the world does right,
Though he no formula exactly can recite.

The expression only fails — he has the insight; well,
When once he has the meat, who cares about the shell?

63.

Not for the life of man — or of the age alone,
Should History tell with thee, but also on thine own.
For the same spirit that rules the warring world sways thee,
The spirit that struggles on through strife to victory.
And as the spirits that weave, with figures ever new,
The carpet of the times, still keep the old in view,
Never forgetting, as to higher steps they climb,
What on the lower steps they wrought in former time, —
So thou, when thy new work the old work seems to undo,
Feelest forever thine the old, as well as new.
When it was in the work, then thy activity
Was prisoned; now, once out, both it and thou are free.
Thou seest that in the stream each ripple shares the race,
Nor does the greatest grudge the least his part and place.

Nor of thy failures one would'st thou from memory lose,
So it has helped thy soul a better thing to choose.

64.

Many memorials ranged around thee here, I see,
Of the dear dead, from whom these relics came to thee.
The precious names they now with silent lips call o'er,
And make thy heart thereby not glad but sad and sore.
Each token seems to say, of life's fair banquet, see!
The empty dish is all that now is left to thee.

65.

The bird that as of old still sings his evening lay, —
With what strange power his song thrills on my heart to-day!
Whence is it? Summer's days all from his reach have past;
The song he sings to-day is grave-song for the last.
'T is a good-night I hear, in this last evening song;
But not for one short night — for a whole winter long.

66.

If Satan will not let our youth quite do without him,
Let them at least be taught some grain of truth about him.
They hear, the Devil, like a roaring lion, scours
The land in quest of prey, which he with greed devours.
Not so; the Devil no more — on murder bent, and plunder —
Goes lion-like up and down, with roar like bellowing thunder.
No, — like a stealthy fox more likely far he slinks
And lurks unseen, with keen sly vision like a lynx.
But how shall the young folk escape his wiles ensnaring,
If he is only known by roaring and by tearing.

67.

I do not love to read what hangs together so
That from each step, perforce, on to the next I go,
Where if I take one step out of the written track,
I lose my way and must begin again far back.
I love that reading best which, open where I will,
Beginning, middle, end, places before me still.

Thou, in thy corner, wait with patience till thy gaze
Can bear to meet unblenched the central noontide
blaze,
As tender lunar light round owl-eyed blearness flows,
Till boldly to the sun an eagle's orbs unclose.
A pale white moon, O earth, thy sun at noonday is,
And endless longing wakes, itself no perfect bliss.
The sun a rainbow weaves upon the cloudy veil;
How pure the sweet accord in the chromatic scale!
But now the rainbow's tints into a second play,
Wherein the enamel bright melts to a sober gray.
Thou not the rainbow art, but faintly in its place
As a mock rainbow stand'st, its half extinguished
trace.
O man, within whose soul love and ambition wed,—
Light of the light art thou, yet shadow of the shade.

24.

The moon rolls round the earth; the earth around
the sun;
He, round a higher; and he, round a still higher one.
And so on still, and still so on forevermore,
Through boundless, endless space, a sea without a
shore?
Nay, if you will, let mind, let power be infinite,
But endlessness of space — I will not hear of it.

Outward infinity, what could thereby be meant?
With that within the mind alone, am I content.
Beyond the body's world, a world of light there lies
From which it fell, to which it seeks again to rise.
By no original light the suns flame out through space;
They shine with borrowed light, reflected from God's face.
A spirit-effluence, light, the whole creation bathes,
A raiment that each limb of the great body swathes,—
A spiritual net, of God's love-glances wove,
That binds the bodily world in meshes of His love.
Each link of the vast chain a higher one will join,
Yearning to be drawn up by energy divine,—
By light's transfiguring power to grow to mighty suns,
Whose effluence then in turn shall feed the feebler ones.
But as toward the edge of light they reach and yearn,
The last and least of them to suns one day shall turn;
And, all that on them is made ripe by solar glow,
The world shall, through and through, more and more sunny grow.
O spirit, thou must bathe thee also in this dew,
If, as a sun, thou wilt shine in this field of blue.

25.

The bodily world needs light that, like a vigorous tree,
It may unfold new forms like blossoms endlessly.
Spirits, in matter bound, gain freedom only where
The freest, toward the great deliverance, do their share.
The light, too, needs in turn the bodily world, whereby
It can alone attain to multiplicity.
For, being but one, it would as many fain appear;
That is the game it plays with this material sphere.
On every rim of cloud its sevenfold hues behold,
On bloom and fruit of trees its glory thousand-fold.
With zest it plays its game, all nature gladsomely
Lends itself to the sport, and we too share their glee.

26.

Upon life's ladder here, my peering glances meet
Nothing above my head, but much beneath my feet.
Far down below, and still in lower depths, I see
Bright swarms of busy life move onward restlessly.
But when I lift my eyes, light only meets my view;
The ladder that leads down, mounts it not upward too?
It surely mounts aloft, full surely must there be
Creatures in higher ranks, Most High, 'twixt me and Thee!

Only I see them not, so dazzled by Thy light,
Which sends its power to aid only my downward sight.
In thousand images Thine image here I spy,
Consoling me that I see not Thyself on high.

27.

"The shadow serves to enhance the splendor of the light!"
For the corporeal world your word, I own, is right;
But to the spirit-world, what can sin's shadow lend,
Which with the holy light of goodness ne'er can blend?
In impotence the light to sink exhausted seems,
When it cannot resolve the shadow in its beams.
But how could shadows, then, dissolve into the light,
When once their stubborn will is set against it quite?
Who shall untie the snarl? Take refuge in this thought:
Shadow will ne'er be light; it comes itself to naught.
Evil devours itself, and with it dies despair;
The good, pure light, remains, — evil, the shadow, where?

28.

O Earth, we stand on thee, and sing, with praise devout,
The elements that work in thee and round about:
The flood that round thee flows; the fire that through thee glows;
The wind that round thy form, like a broad mantle, blows.
So inexhaustible, so marvellous the three,—
Each well might seem the source whence all things came to be;
So that wise men, who first mused on creation's birth,
Disputed if from this or that the world sprang forth.
These said, from out the deep the world emerging came;
Those, from the ether's breath; those, from the glowing flame.
We the contending sects in easy concord bind,
And see the world bloom out from flood and fire and wind.
Whoso in nature's web the threads could sunder right,
Would find of threefold strands each woven and twisted tight.

But Nature's tapestry we would not pick apart,
On the tripartite whole content to feast the heart.

29.

Sole link that to the world henceforth attaches me,
Since from the throng of men I had the mind to flee, —
By whom from time to time the world to me is brought,
Else in my solitude I should perceive it not, —
News from the world, thou, Friend, dost faithfully impart,
But little food for thought, and naught that glads the heart.
Naught do I hear from there that can inveigle me
To quit my peaceful port and tempt once more the sea.
My outlook is o'ercast, and yet with pain I own
What makes my sky so dark is not old age alone.
A discontented race, from Providence estranged,
Would change its world, and yet would not itself be changed.
Where, though no outward war, an inward conflict burns,
The bond of gladsome life to very death-cramp turns.

From the birth-pangs of Fate abortions spring each hour,
The moment's rush and whirl all peace and joy devour.
I know not to what nook, O Science, thou shalt flee,
But dry shall be thy fount, past question, Poesy!
Where unbelief, by turns, and bigotry hold sway,
That would the soul, and this the senses, take away;
This shall not kill the mind, yet makes it a dull tool;
This shall not kill the soul, but make it a dull pool.
And in this pit of sin, this wintry frost of woe,
Hope for the world, but one — this one, new faith — I know:
Faith that the Spirit, whose eye the sun is, will, when earth
Cries loud from time to time for help, send helpers forth;
And when the misery seems past cure to human sight,
He will, in human form, Himself on earth alight.
Already oft has He come down to men forlorn,
And even now He thinks where He shall next be born.

30.

The Age's spectre-dance let flit and glimmer by;
It may amuse but, sure, cannot confuse thine eye.

Yet while thy spirit braves the maze with steadfast
brow,
Remember, there are some have weaker brains than
thou.
Increase not thou the whirl where drunken souls reel
round,
But rather show them where firm foothold can be
found.

31.

I give thee, O my son, — this shalt thou grateful
own, —
Not thoughts themselves outright, but germs of
thought alone.
Thoughts that have once been thought, no man can
think once more;
New trees cannot be made of blossoms old ones
bore.
Yet when a bud of thought thy genial soul shall hold,
Original thought of thine as blossom 't will unfold.

32.

In a strange land was I brought into slavery;
A gracious master there pitied and purchased me.
Then, when a year was past, he to his faithful slave
His freedom and, beside, two silver pieces gave.

Straightway I vowed with one my homeward fare to pay,
And gratefully in alms the other give away.
But, crossing a bazaar, I saw of birds a pair
Hung in a cage for sale, placed by their captor there.
For one released from bonds, what worthier work can be
Than to redeem the slave and set the captive free?
Yet for the two the man asked silver pieces twain,
And for my journey one I gladly would retain.
To take one piece for both the man would not agree;
Shall I then of the two buy one and set him free?
Haply they are a pair, and shall I part the twain?
Far better, then, they both as prisoners should remain.
But stubbornly the man stuck to his first demand;
I paid my pieces down, and had none left in hand.
"Who gives you meat and drink will for my wants provide;
Who points your homeward way, me to my home will guide.
But should I let you loose in the strange city here,
Where no green tree holds out safe shelter and glad cheer,
How soon ye would once more be snared by evil men,
Where haply none might come to set you free again!"

So through the city gates, and far from trodden
ways,
I took them to the wood's most inaccessible maze,
And let them go; and as toward heaven on joyous
wing,
They rose, between themselves I heard them say, or
sing:
"How shall we recompense him who so freely
spent
His all to make us free of the broad firmament?
May he a darling wife fold one day to his heart,
He who a wingèd pair not cruelly would part.
We know all roads and lanes, both town and field
we know,
And gladly at his need would on his errands go;
But a substantial friend we gladlier would provide,
Who leads man by the hand through life, his dearest
guide,
Dost thou not know a spot, a treasure know'st thou
not,
Might give him back the means to reach that home
long sought?
Beneath that dry old tree, buried in yonder field,
For ages there has lain a silver shrine concealed.
Amply will that for all his journey's needs provide,
And more, to keep at home as dowry for his bride."

They soared away, and I looked after them and thought:
"The prattle of light birds shall I regard or not?
They hover in the air, and make believe they know
All secrets that lie hid down in the earth below.
How could the vagrants see a treasure, as they said,
Who could not see the snare the crafty fowler spread?
Yet fate makes bright or blind men's eyes, for good or ill;
Mighty is fate, but God's good grace is mightier still."
In God's name, then, I go straight to the place assigned,
Begin to dig, and there the silver casket find.
I found, for my poor two, pieces enough, and more,
To build both road and bridge home to my very door;
But road and bridge, all made and laid, I found beside;
And so I only took a little for my bride.

33.

Restrain thy wrath; let Him take vengeance who knows how
To vindicate thy cause more wisely far than thou.
The unrelenting King who ne'er a fault forgave,
By pardoning one offence his life at last did save.

"How was it?" dost thou say?—I will declare to thee,
As I have found it writ in faithful history.
This king on hunting-day, with bold and reckless mood,
Revels in blood of beasts, as once in human blood.
As 'mid his train he rides, in stately hunting gear,
An arrow, flying by, just grazes his left ear.
Now will the explosive wrath of the stern King blaze high!
How will each drop of blood for bloody vengeance cry!
But no! It seemed as if that arrow in his ear
Had whispered a low word that turned his wrath to fear.
"I might," it said, "have pierced thy heart; but I forbore,
And mercifully grazed thy ear-tip—nothing more."
He took up from the grass the arrow stained with blood,
And placed within his vest that piece of holy wood.
Where is the archer now, who made the master shot,
Which in a monarch's mind such blessèd change hath wrought?
It is the stranger-youth, who would not tell his name
When first at court he served, nor yet from whence he came.

"Pay him and let him go," the King commands, "for here
Of royal vengeance he would stand in constant fear.
For this, I trow, the world not oft has seen me do, —
To pardon an offence and even reward it too."
The strange youth thanks his stars and quickly goes his way.
The King the arrow kept in memory of the day;
Whereby admonished, he firm to his purpose stood,
To mercy still inclined, and shy of shedding blood.
But lo! the hearts that once beneath his wrath were cowed,
Now, when his own relents, all mutiny aloud.
So wild the uproar grows, he flees his land at last,
But hid beneath his vest, the arrow still clings fast —
An arrow of remorse, that gnaws the exile's heart,
Yet its low voice alone has balm to soothe the smart.
In a far land at last, where every stranger found
To slavery is brought, he too is seized and bound.
In the dark palace-yard he lies, there chained all day,
Where o'er the lofty wall scarce climbs the sun's faint ray.
From far a joyous shout is borne upon the air;
He thinks upon the chase and wishes he were there.

He draws the arrow forth with sad and bodeful thought,
Which hitherto naught else but grief to him had brought.
A bird of paradise above his head sails by;
With free and careless hand he lets the arrow fly.
The shot has missed the bird, but finds a mark without
Among the happy group whence rang that joyous shout.
There stands the monarch's son in stately hunting gear,
The arrow, flying, comes and grazes his left ear.
Amazed, all cry at once: "Whence did that arrow fly?"
"From yonder palace-yard, walled in so dark and high."
"Who is confined therein?" "A stranger lately caught."
"Forthwith," commands the Prince, "hither let him be brought."
They bring him, and he thinks, now death his doom must be,
But lo, the Prince inspects the arrow carefully;
Then, holding it aloft, says to the exile now:
"Prince, in thy service once an unknown man hadst thou.

The udders all are dry; all foddering is in vain;
The lambs no drop of milk can from their mothers drain."
The old man shakes his head perplexed: "So suddenly
The udders all dried up! Who knows whence this can be?"
Up spake the daughter then: "The cause is this, I trow, —
The Prince's heart no love bears for his country now;
For as when Heaven no more its heart to earth inclines,
No herd of living man but languishes and pines, —
So when the Prince's heart turns coldly from the land
Which has been given in charge to him by Heaven's high hand."
The old man said: "What then remains, but leave behind
A land forsaken of God, another home to find?
Go, boy, and let the beasts take here their last night's rest!
And thou, my daughter, serve thy last meal for our guest.
To many a guest we here have given both meat and drink;
Let this one, too, have cause kindly of us to think."

No guest shall at our hands find meat or drink here more;
Who knows where in strange lands we may find open door?"
The Prince now looked on her, who donned her best the while,
And served him a new meal, and spiced it with her smile.
The meal remained untouched; but this time, it was not
That of his merry train and golden halls he thought:
Nay, 't was because he thought upon the word she spoke,
At which, for the first time, love in his bosom woke, —
Love for his land, with which went hand in hand, I guess,
Another, which he scarce might to himself confess.
"Woe on the pride," he said, "O heart, that fooled thee so,
And like a curse brought down an innocent home so low!
Why was it hid from me that Heaven withholds its hand,
When love weds not the hearts of princes to their land?"

He mused; just then came in the herdsman's boy once more,
And of the cattle's plight was questioned, as before.
He said: "The herd seems now in quite another mood.
The swelling udders burst, and pour a foaming flood;
The milk-pails, snowy-white, all overflowing stand;
Plainly they have no more desire to quit the land."
The old man's lifted eyes his daughter's face have sought,
Who sat in musing lost. Full well she knew his thought,
And, smiling, out she spake: "This is because, I trow,
The Prince's heart in love turns to his country now;
For, as when Heaven its heart turns kindly to the earth,
The herds of all that live partake their food with mirth,—
So when the Prince's heart turns kindly to the land
Which has been given in charge to him by Heaven's high hand."
Then out the old farmer spake: "To Heaven due praises pay,
That with such timely grace hath blessed the land to-day!

We shall not now be forced from our loved land to fare.
But to the Prince's ear, who then our thanks shall bear?
I plainly see, O guest, — as from thy raiment now
The rain has dried away, — of noble rank art thou.
To-morrow bear our word with thee to princely halls;
But take thy rest to-day within a peasant's walls."

35.

A nobleman as guest came to another's gate,
And on a flying leaf sent in this card of state:
"Is entrance granted me? I come, as comes the feather
And sails away again in the light summer weather."
Then came the answer out: "We give thee not the right
To enter at our gate; thou mak'st thyself too light."
Then went the message in: "I come as comes the stone,
Which, tossed into the sea, lies quiet where 't was thrown."
Then came the answer forth: "We never can allow
Thy entrance at our gate; too heavy far art thou."

Then went the message in: "I come as mounted men,
Who, when their errand 's done, mount and ride on again."
Then he within called out: "That word I like the best.
Porter, fling wide the gate to such a noble guest!"

36.

Far in the Southern seas, on islands, dwells a race,
Rich in content, and pure from evil's faintest trace.
The islands in a group stretch like a garland round;
Separate, distinct, they lie, — sundered, yet closely bound.
On every isle a small and peaceful people dwell;
All from one sire have sprung, no legend needs to tell.
And over all of them holds rule the island Queen;
No armèd host has she, and peaceful is her mien.
And peaceful is the mind her subject-peoples bear;
No war-flag fires their blood, nor glory's trumpet-blare.
Their weapons are their prayers, — their glory, songs and psalms,
In Nature's temple sung beneath the spreading palms.

The palms their roof-tree form; in palm-leaves dressed they stand;
And palm-trees drop the fruit as food into their hand.
This fruit contains within oil, milk, and hydromel,
Which makes man's spirit gay, and keeps him always well.
As is the life of man, so is the palm-tree's there;
They live a hundred years, and fruit each month they bear.
When, hollow with old age, a trunk falls by the sand,
They use it for a skiff, to coast from strand to strand.
And then they need no oar, no rudder, mast, nor sails;
Along that crystal flood breathe ever favoring gales.
When they would take a gift, the guest's kind heart to show,
They need but reach and pluck sea-corals as they go,
Which under water pale in tender clusters grow,
But, hardening in the air, to brilliant colors glow.
For money, they use none, but gathered shells that lay,
And borrowed on the beach bright hues from noon-tide's ray.
But as they wage no war themselves, at times from far
Come strangers to their shores to play the game of war.

Pirates come cruising round, shiploads of warlike troops,
Through the sea-passages of the Peace Island-groups.
But all their fighting ends in fights among themselves;
They never touch the goods upon the island-shelves;
For they have heard and so believe, as well they might:
On him who should touch *them* the curse of Heaven would light.
This creed alone has kept the island-peoples free,
Who else, unarmed, had been consigned to slavery.
But when a seaman comes — a peaceful one — to land,
Gladly the island maid in marriage gives her hand.
Then comes the roving fit, and calmly he, I wis,
Leaves wife and child behind, his briefly tasted bliss.
For, an adopted land men leave, and scarcely mourn, —
But with sore pain the land where they were bred and born.
The seaman carries home, when skies and seas are clear,
The tale that none believe, yet all delight to hear.

37.

A certain King had once — the legend tells us — stored
Within his palace-walls of books the hugest hoard.

And when he journeyed round, a hundred camels strode,
Each bearing on his back a literary load.
At last he grew aware — how could he fail to be? —
'T was cumb'rous journeying with such a bookery.
So, for convenience' sake, he had a hundred sages
A travelling library extract from all these pages.
Of these, again, was made an abstract, which when he
Went journeying, one stout mule could carry easily.
But he must have his things more snugly packed, he said,
And of the abstract they another abstract made.
In one small volume now the mule's load was comprised,
Which in his hand the King could bear uncompromised.
Yet was it still for him a burden somewhat sore;
The abstract's abstract now they must abstract once more.
So from the extract-book they set themselves to extract
One sentence as its pith, short, simple, and compact.
This could he comprehend, and easily retain,
And by it guide his soul and regulate his reign.
Did he succeed in this? If not, it must be laid
To this, — that he himself the abstract had not made.

But this is certain : thou, for thy salvation's sake,
Must from the waste of books thyself such abstract make.

38.

The post assigned to thee, fail not to understand,
Nor sunder heaven and earth with a presumptuous hand.
For both God placed thee here : the fight of earth to wage ;
And still toward heavenly peace pursue thy pilgrimage.
Whoso seeks idle peace for private ends alone,
A traitor to the world's great commonwealth is shown.
To further human weal with all thy power below,
No sacrifice too great, save peace of soul, I know.
But let no power compel, no glory blind thine eyes, —
Nor Love tempt thee to make to her this sacrifice.
This no self-seeking is, — shirking things hard to do ;
To thine eternal self, thy work is, to be true.

BOOK III.

1.

Now flies the swallow hence, and after her the Summer;
Waits a fair Autumn there, — then welcome the newcomer!
So he who yet no share in the year's pleasure took,
May now enjoy until stern Winter shuts the book.

2.

There will I let them hang, all the long winter through,
My withered wreaths, till Spring the blossoms wakes anew, —
Not only as a sign of joys bloomed out and gone,
But as a pledge to hope of joys still coming on.

3.

A little longer yet, a glad and patient mood, —
Then shall all dark be bright, all evil turn to good.

E'en now soft gleams break out, the gloomy clouds betwixt;
E'en now a foretaste sweet is with the bitter mixt.
If still the shadow wanes, and light comes sure but slow,
Though heavy falls the shade and feeble still the glow, —
A little longer yet, a glad and patient mood!
Soon shall all dark be bright, all evil turn to good.

4.

The days, the precious days; we gladly let them fly,
That still more precious fruit may ripen by and by:
A rare and wondrous plant that shall bloom out some night, —
A child we're training up, a book we long to write.

5.

How high or low thou art — *that* solves not all thy thinking;
But *feeling* tells if thou art rising now or sinking.
Sinking, thou feel'st thy weight; rising, thy buoyancy;
There, by thyself opprest — here, from all pressure free.

This note and heed meanwhile: freely canst thou, my friend,
From lowest depth mount up, from loftiest height descend.

6.

The world's great reckoning-book contains and keeps in it
What we enjoy, profess, and love — all fairly writ.
How long a time to enjoy is here to each assigned,
He knows, Who has the Book all written in His mind.

7.

Where in the land and how to dwell, thou askest, friend,
That thou may'st reach the bliss of man, life's aim and end?
Dwell under heaven's broad roof, on turf, in green self-drest,
And rest in full content on Nature's bounteous breast.
Dwell in the well-tilled field, where Nature on thee waits,
And honest toil enjoys the fulness it creates.
Dwell in the populous town where stirs a busy life;
Act and be acted on, in mutual human strife.

Dwell in the wilderness, where foot of man ne'er trod,
Where Nature rests from work; live to thyself and God.
Dwell wheresoe'er thou may'st, thou still canst bide and be
A man, and here or there do all things humanly.

8.

With glory and renown the heart is never sated;
'T is surfeited and sick, long ere 't is satiated.
They say the ear-drum rings, when fame thy praises sings;[1]
But a weak stupor 't is, when of itself it rings.
Let neither this nor that wake in thy ear such roar,
But tranquil peace within thy bosom shut her door.

9.

Men's praise or blame makes not thy true nobility;
Yet better than half praise is hearty blame for thee.
Blame is a spur to thee which, as just blame, thou prizest;
The unjust harms thee not, which justly thou despisest.

[1] Popular superstition: "When your ear burns, somebody is talking about you." — *Tr.*

But bald, flat praise, as if for sop of riddance meant,
That is a crumb which none but beggars can content.

10.

"Why cravest thou more wealth, more fame than thou hast now?
Will they increase thy heart's true welfare, thinkest thou?"
Wealth, fame, I seek them not to glut myself therein;
I seek them but as means my soul's high end to win:
To make the weapons bright and sharp, of consciousness,
The Beautiful, my joy, more clearly to express.

11.

Not at the swallow's song who Summer's message brings,
And of eternal youth and world-renewal sings,
Such thrill of joy I feel as a friend's greeting gives,
Who brings me that one thing by which alone man lives.
That world-show vanisheth; that heart's love knows no death;
This blows upon my heart with more than Springtime's breath.

12.

What inly seizes thee, let ripen by degrees:
What glides by outwardly, that must thou quickly seize.
What is not seized at once, is lost to thee forever;
What in thy soul grows ripe, is born to perish never.

13.

Why goest thou from thyself out in the world of men?
To come back from the whirl to thine own peace again.
And why from that world's whirl comest thou back to this?
To think out, for the world, in silence thoughts of bliss.
Blest art thou if the world gives thee what thou canst use,
And if these thoughts of thine the world shall not refuse.

14.

As the cured sick man feels full bliss of health at last,
Then only when he thinks upon the sickness past,—

Rejoiced that life's full tide once more flows freely
on,
All hindrances henceforth, he hopes, forever gone;
So, too, the man who thinks on sins and errors past,
Whence God has led him forth to the right way at
last.
Right gladly can he now pursue the rightful track,
Strongly resolved that he will never more turn back.
Yet as the cured one feels the memory of past pain
Whisper a warning low, then die away again;
So he who sadly thinks on sins and errors past,
Only his backward glance with keener pang is cast.
For difference vast it makes in what one has to
bear,
Whether or no his fault has in his fate a share.

15.

When courage faileth thee, thy power to work fails
too;
The nerveless, crippled arm no more its task can do.
When courage once revives within the fainting heart,
Then will the quickened shoot to wild luxuriance
start.
Then daily pray to God that He, as wise as good,
Will keep thee from the weak, and from the wilful
mood.

16.

A Paradise never lost, account far less, O men,
Than a lost Paradise entreated back again.
Believe me, for I say the first *is* lost to you;
The other, when ye will, is born in you anew.
Else would I ne'er advise, were it not lost before,
That you should lose it now, to get it back once more.

17.

To be what thou art not, what thou art meant to be,
That which thou should'st and canst, — scant space earth giveth thee.
The task is infinite, so from this finite earth
Into the infinite beyond it stretches forth!
Good cheer! What here thou dost, yonder with thee shall go:
And what that world completes, must be begun below.

18.

Stand not aloof from where men meet to worship, proud
That thou canst pray alone as well as in a crowd.
True, God is everywhere, and in the crowd thou art
No nearer Him, unless thou heed'st Him in thy heart.

Yet, in a common flame if many fagots burn,
By the intenser glow thy senses well discern.

19.

Shame on thee, that thou hast firm in thy hand not yet
The bridle, nor thy foot firm in the stirrup set!
Shame, that the saddle proves so loose a seat to thee,
Tossed by the headstrong steed of passion endlessly!

20.

Do good and speak the truth, thou *must.* To rack thy brain
About the reason *why,* were labor spent in vain.
I know no other way; wilt thou, or nilt, thou must.
Well for thee if the right with heartfelt joy thou dost.

21.

What others do thou need'st not always understand,
That thou may'st ably do the work thou hast in hand.
Yet with twofold success and joy thy labor fares,
If, while thou dost thy work, thou understandest theirs.

22.

Against the ungenial world thou utterest loud complaints;
Thou canst not bear, thou say'st, society's restraints.
Thou seek'st the wilderness, to fly from man—and lo!
He clings to thee e'en there, and will not let thee go.
But if thou must thyself endure and tolerate,
Why from thy image then would'st thou be separate?
With Nature thou canst feel far more in unison,
Because thou dost not ask her path thy way to run.
Thou wilt prescribe *thy* way to men, and men alone,
Forgetting that, like thee, each of them is his own.
Frost, rain, hail, storm, and wind thou bearest patiently;
Man's waywardness alone annoys and angers thee?
The man who refuge seeks in flight from life's restraint
Is like the child who flees parental chastisement;
Who through all bogs and briers of trouble plunges in,
To take revenge (he thinks) on hated discipline.
Life's limits the true man will own and honor, too,
And to that knowledge feel his freedom to be due.
Action, his inner store, still to increase he strives;
Suffering, an outward thing, he bravely from him drives.

Yet even suffering he can change to action, too,
When, acting humanly, he leads men to so do;
For Passion only 't is that makes men disagree;
Only in Reason lies the strength of unity.
Man's problem is, to train and to debarbarize
Himself, and help his race in culture's scale to rise.

23.

If pleased with what is done, then gladly rest therein;
And if it please thee not, then something new begin;
Yet let not what is done please thee beyond due bound,
For genuine joy alone is in fresh action found.

24.

'T is not enough the thing clearly to understand;
Know it by heart thou must, to practise it off-hand.
Hast it at thy tongue's end, to understand the thing
No need — as thou may'st see in the art of reckoning.
For in the noble art of reckoning, as we see,
Perfection best is gained, when one from thought is free.

25.

Thou seest how easily with one things go off-hand,
Which thou must rack thy brain long time to understand;

While thou so nimbly deal'st with things of which his brain,
With all its agonies, a notion scarce can gain.
Then either, if thine own exploits thou prizest so,
Set not the accomplishments of other men too low;
Or, if their doing thou so very cheaply rate,
Hold not thy doing, then, as anything so great.

26.

Thou canst not see grass grow, how sharp soe'er thou be,
Yet that the grass has grown, thou very soon canst see;
So, though thou canst not see thy work now prospering, — know,
The print of every work time without fail shall show.

27.

Happy the man, not left to form himself complete,
Whom earlier models lend their traits by usage sweet.
A father he has known, a teacher has he found,
To whom by ties of love his pliant heart is bound, —
To whom he clings and climbs, by whom, unconscious, grows,
And so is good and strong and noble ere he knows.

And then, when Duty speaks, he has but this to do:
Continue consciously, as he, unconscious, grew.

28.

If rightly to the mark my leader thou wilt be,
Thou shalt not go too slow, nor yet too fast for me.
Thou shalt not hold too much discourse upon the way,
Lest we forget the end, or from the pathway stray.
Make short for me the road, and light and clear and free, —
Not hard, to make thyself the needfuller to me;
For time will come when I my guide shall have outgrown,
And I would learn of thee to go my way alone.

29.

Self-interest is, with most, the source of gratitude
For whatsoe'er thou dost, or hast done, for their good;
Yet thy best recompense is gratitude so born,
Which thou with gratitude should'st take, and not with scorn.
Be thankful for the thanks which even self-interest brings,
That from so base a soil a shoot so noble springs.

30.

From one devoid of good, some good may one day grow;
One who is turned away, can never rightwise go.
Thou buildest up false things upon a false foundation.
Thou canst, O misformed man, have no true cultivation.

31.

When thou with Nature feel'st a balance in thy soul,
Thou dost no longer doubt the world a perfect whole;
The balance once disturbed, doubt well may rise in thee;
The elements themselves against thee mutiny.
Yet must the human soul keep all its weapons bright,
With seasons and with climes to wage a strenuous fight.
And evermore the world a perfect thing is wrought,
Though the perfection comes at last from human thought;
For to this very end, the whole included man,
That man's mind might complete and crown the mighty plan.

32.

I honor him who strives and struggles toward the ideal;
I honor him no less who prospers in the real.
But him I love, who, with divine impartiality,
Highest ideal weds to realest reality.[1]

33.

By many-sidedness the crystal charms the sight;
Therein the broken ray plays with a live delight.
Yet in its way and place one-sidedness is good;
The joy of the blue sky is the lake's glassy flood.

34.

I.

Perfection is an end that mocks approach indeed,
But one that must be sought by struggling, not by speed.

II.

One forward step, that gains sure foothold on the track,
Is worth two steps ahead, where one slides three steps back.

[1] I have not ventured to attempt to match Rückert's *Wirklichstkeit* (Realest-ity !). —*Tr.*

III.

When once you think no more how far you 're on your way,
The journey is half o'er; the rest is merely play.

IV.

He finds, who seeks — 't is true; only not he who, blind,
Seeks where not even God's eyes the thing he seeks could find.

V.

Where thou know'st not the way, there take a guide to thee.
But does the guide himself know it? Be sure and see!

VI.

New sandals pinch the feet, — grown easy, they 're all torn;
When once you get things right, their loss you have to mourn.

VII.

The word has magic power, it brings the matter forth;
Take heed, then, not to give a bad thing oral birth.

VIII.

Once give thy sorrow words — thou art relieved of it;
Once give thy pleasure words — thou art bereaved of it.

IX.

Who makes his promise loud and strong as mouth
can make it,
Gives proof to thee, thereby, he has a mind to break it.

X.

He who lies once, a course of falsehood has begun,
For seven lies it takes to keep in countenance one.

XI.

The serpent in his tooth, the scorpion in his tail,
His poison keeps, — but man's from all parts will
assail.

XII.

Who sees the fruit, its tree can readily declare;
The gardener sees the tree and knows what fruit 'twill
bear.

XIII.

Say not of any man behind his back a thing
Which you before his face would shrink from uttering.

XIV.

Offence cannot be given unless one takes the offence;
If thrown down at thy feet, thou need'st not lift it
thence.

XV.

O King, if thou wilt not in this world favor me,
Thy favor in the next will help nor me nor thee.

XVI.

The dog will wag and whine to coax from thee his meat;
The noble steed must thou caress and coax to eat.

XVII.

Where beggars are ashamed to ask, or even receive,
Must not the bounteous be no less ashamed to give?

XVIII.

Who sleeps, no hunger knows; alas for that poor wight
Who cannot close his eyes, for hunger, all the night.

XIX.

A wretched set of keys that open but not close;
Soon wilt thou be starved out with such poor keys as those!

XX.

The wife can carry out, in her small apron, more
Than in his cart the man can wheel in at the door.

XXI.

What is esteemed in man, in woman is despised;
The hen that like the cock will crow, is sacrificed.[1]

[1] "Whistling girls and crowing hens
Never come to happy ends." — *Old Song.*

XXII.

If a great good thou hast, crave not the little one;
Need'st thou the torch's glare when shines the noon-day sun?

XXIII.

What thou art used to, soon thy heart will hanker for 't;
Accustom not thy child to evil, even in sport.

XXIV.

He innocently errs who knows not the right way,—
Not he who sees the road, but in the wood will stray.

XXV.

No man more wofully wanders in error's night,
Than he who wilfully forsakes the path of right.

XXVI.

An unembarrassed mind another's track can use;
A self-embarrassed soul its own will oft confuse.

XXVII.

Learn patience from the earth, thy field and dwelling-place;
The plough tears through her heart, and she repays 't with grace.

XXVIII.

Revenge a rapture is that may live out the day,
But magnanimity a bliss that lasts for aye.

XXIX.

Modesty is a dress that doth all men beseem,
But doubly him who had most cause for self-esteem.

35.

From tyrannous Time had I sought refuge as he passed,
And from his storms had found a sheltering rest at last.
I set my house to rights, and snugly closed the door,
And let mad Time meanwhile outside still rave and roar.
I thought: I 've staid behind, and Time has gone far by;
When lo! I found 't was Time had staid behind, not I.
What is there back of him, from which his flight he takes;
What is there out of him, which he forever seeks?

36.

There a broad gateway lies, a narrow door beside:
Through this, one goes on foot; through that they drive and ride.

The road is thronged; to-day all dust, and dung
to-morrow;
The door is sure and safe, albeit low and narrow.
To stoop and squeeze can be no great annoyance,
sure;
Only to stoop and squeeze I never could endure.
And as I through the door pass in and out each day,
I, fool, still choose the broad and not the narrow
way.
I feel as if some harm on me that day would break,
When through the narrow yoke I pass with bended
neck;
And every time I seem to have escaped that day,
When I have crowded through the broad and miry
way,
Thou say'st, 't is nonsense all, and superstition. True;
And yet for me it has a grain of blessing too.
For no more, out or in, I go now thoughtlessly;
My folly on the way always occurs to me.
The man is wise who knows his folly, and the
power
With which men's feet are led by Folly every
hour.
When thou with Folly's might no longer canst
contend,
Thou canst at least to her a touch of wisdom lend.

37.

I daily saw a man whose name I did not know;
I always meant to ask and still neglected to.
Meanwhile I heard a name oft named familiarly;
But ne'er could see the man whose name it chanced to be.
Curious enough, was I, the oft named man to view,—
Curious to learn his name whose face so well I knew.
I find at last that name, this man, are both the same,
And now I care no more for either man or name.

38.

They heaped upon me praise; their very praises shamed me.
They heaped upon me blame; and in my courage lamed me.
Either both praise and blame they gave in some wrong way,
Or else I took them wrong; but which I cannot say.
Both praise and blame, by right, a strengthening sense should leave,
That something has been gained, and more is to achieve.

39.

I know not what the world, meanwhile, has seen and done,
But weighty things, no doubt, have been beneath the sun.
Only no one of them has reached my eye or ear;
No faintest sign thereof have I detected here.
And yet they have gone on, although I knew it not,
And made, though unperceived, my world or cold or hot.
For the great body naught can touch in any part,
But sympathetic pangs through all the members dart;
And could I only read my heart's true looking-glass,
I there should see the world and all that comes to pass.
Now I must wait till fame and the gazette, at last,
Bring to my ear and eye the news of what is passed,
That with the weal and woe I may rejoice or weep,
Which have befall'n the world the while I lay asleep.

40.

The hours and days, as they with changeful mood go by,
Tempt thee to rate thy work too low, or all too high.

Let not those evil sprites, the proud, the spiritless,
O'ermaster in thy soul the genuine lowliness.
The highest self-respect consists with modesty;
O instrument of God, He does the work through thee!

41.

In highways and in byways, thou shalt be seen with none
But only honorable and honored folk, my son.
Half of the honor 's thine, when men before them fall,
And thou wilt, by and by, learn to deserve it all.

42.

Devoutly I looked up to see the rain fall fast,
That comes, long craved, to cheer the thirsting world at last.
I always for myself have had enough to drink,
But naught could slake my thirst while on the world's I think;
But now, for very thirst, though all in silence drank,
In their name and my own must I the Father thank.

43.

Ye hills, beneath whose breast I laid my loved and blest,
They are not wholly lost, for still ye guard their rest.

What is the might of Death? When flowers of sweetest breath,
Where I had never dreamed, fair Spring awakeneth?
What 's lost forevermore, when Love's hand carpets o'er,
With green and bloom, a spot dreary and bare before?

44.

I cannot from my house upward or downward go,
But two lost children walk beside me to and fro;
For upward from my door there lies a ditch, whose brink
I never can approach, to cross it, but I think
How, the last time, with them along this way I came,
When Death in both e'en now had lit his hidden flame.
For children's little feet the ditch was far too wide,
Yet they no danger feared, with Father for a guide.
I lifted them across, and thought o'er each abyss
Henceforth to bear them safe, as I had done o'er this.
It brought not then to mind *one* deep and dreary pit,
As now it always does since they were laid in it.
But downward from the house, if I would take my way,
There is the pavement where the hearse-wheels rolled one day.

That rumble still I hear, and seem to see the track,
Though many a one has since gone rumbling forth and back.
But pass whatever may, naught can wipe out that trace;
And still I tread that track, which time shall ne'er efface.

45.

I never on my bed my nightly slumber seek,
Till with my hand I feel my little darling's cheek;
And when I, in the dark, have felt his flesh, — to *see*
His face I do not need — the touch suffices me.
I know full well that touch no good to *him* will do,
Unless a better Power guards him the long night through;
Yet should I once refrain, my fancy makes me fear,
For evil powers to work, the way would then be clear;
And if my child, natheless, had slept on safely still,
Yet I myself, meanwhile, had slept that night but ill.

46.

What dost thou say to me? Thou 'lt surely speak once more
A word to me from there, where thou hast gone before!

With speaking looks dost thou, O Sister Spirit, stand
Before my eyes, as once thou trod'st this earthly land!
The well-known features still, the tones I loved to hear,
Though softened to the sense, less loud upon the ear;
Yet making clear that thou, contented with thy lot,
To sympathize with mine, e'en there forgettest not.
Thou lettest me, too, share, by sympathy, thy bliss,
Peace-wafted to thy world, as thou hast been to this.

47.

Be to thy friend a friend — that's Friendship's law for thee;
It is not in the bond, *his* friend *thy* friend shall be.
That he with one hand takes thee, with the other me,
Forms no immediate bond between myself and thee.
But his *foe's* friend to be I cannot tolerate,
For none can love the one he knows his friend to hate.

48.

A miser who surveys his gold with gloating eyes,
And worships toward the shrine wherein his treasure lies,

Who of his goods enjoys naught else except the view, —
Reopening still the chest, only to shut it to, —
Is wiser still by far than many a man, called wise,
Who has a nobler gained than any golden prize.
A living treasure he has gained of flesh and blood,
Yet ever from the sight thereof derives no good.
The children God has given, what good to thee are they,
If thou from them thine eyes, indifferent, turn'st away?
If seldom with pure joy their forms thine eyes behold,
And scarcely look at them save to command or scold?

49.

Around me in the house a still and busy stir,
My musing thoughts do much to vacancy prefer.
The little Maker, Mind, contentment feels therein,
As the great Maker, midst the world's melodious din.
But one sharp cry, the dream creative disappears,
And all is over now with harmony of the spheres.

50.

Woman, as wife to man, for this has Nature sent,
That spirit may be made by body's help content;

The spirit, having paid toll at the sense's door,
May through its realms henceforth all unobstructed soar.
While he within the world of mind life's fruit matures,
She against outward storm his inward work ensures;
And thus what he works out, she too has jointly wrought,
While she has lived for him, while he for her has thought.
What school taught *me* to teach this lesson, askest thou?
My spring of love[1] has borne its wisdom's harvest now.

51.

A friend came home, of whom for years I had not heard;
Nor had he heard of me in all that time one word.
He came and went, and still he learned not much of me,
Because himself was all he let me hear or see.
'T was plain he little cared about my life to learn, —
To tell about his own, that was his chief concern;
So what he got from me in truth was simply naught,
And I from him so much as I could use have caught.

[1] Allusion to the author's book called "Liebesfruhling." — *Tr.*

52.

A wretched business 't is, and one which ne'er can thrive,
When none will simply stick to that he ought to drive;
When each neglects his work, at other men's to peep,
This one will not drive goats because that one drives sheep;
Will not tend shop because that other tends a mill;
Or drive a coach, because his neighbor drives a quill;
Or because *he* grinds paints, refuses to grind corn;
Or to keep books, because *he* to *make* books is born.
Where other men go high, still higher he would go;
Where others are atop, he will not stay below.
A wretched business that, and one that ne'er can thrive;
No thrift is in the land, when thus their work they drive.

53.

Of Innocence and Peace, once has been seen the reign,
And sick Humanity shall hail it once again.
In far futurity, as in the past, the bliss
Of that bright age gleams out to cheer the woe of this.

Yes, once that kingdom was, and yet will come again:
In Heaven or on the Earth? No doubt can, else remain.
Up yonder, 't were enough for my own piety;
But I could wish it here for them that follow me.

54.

That high above thy reach soars unattainably
The type of Good and Fair — should that discourage thee?
It should encourage thee and keep the fire alive;
It stands too high, that thou may'st ever higher strive.

55.

Six little words lay claim to me each passing day:
I *ought*, I *must*, I *can*, I *will*, I *dare*, I *may*.
I Ought: that is the law God on my heart has written,
The mark for which my soul is with strong yearning smitten.
I Must: that is the bound set either side the way
By Nature and the World, so that I shall not stray.
I Can: that measures out the power intrusted me
Of action, knowledge, art, skill, and dexterity.

I Will: no higher crown on human head can rest;
'T is Freedom's signet seal upon the soul impressed
I Dare, is the device which on the seal you read,
By Freedom's open door a bolt for time of need.
I May, among them all hovers uncertainly;
The moment must at last decide what it shall be.
I ought, I must, I can, I will, I dare, I may:
The six lay claim to me each hour of every day.
Teach me, O God! and then, then shall I know, each day,
That which I ought to do, must, can, will, dare, and may.

56.

Infinite in thyself, yet finite outwardly,
A mystery to thyself, thou feel'st thyself to be.
But understand! What seem past reconciling quite,—
Finite and Infinite,—yet at one point unite.
Thou art not yet become, but ever going to be,
And in all growth there lies self-contrariety.
Infinite, while it grows, must yet as finite show,
Finite, unfolding still, to infinite will grow.

57.

"Why is the one great self, the whole humanity,
Torn into little selves, conflicting endlessly?"

That these in discord part, not meet in unison,
Charge to the single souls that all have sprung from one,—
Who in their singleness keep not the unity,
As all the blossoms help make up the blooming tree.
For so should they who own one soul-enkindling glow,
Into each other flame, yet not confounded flow,—
A many-branching tree of universal reason,
One mind's harmonious thoughts creating in their season;
Where, of itself, each thought would be a ray divine,
But not a light, till all in unison should shine.
Some faint approach to this he makes whose mind has caught,
By strong reflective power, what earlier minds had thought,—
Who thinks the thoughts men still shall think when he is gone,
Who every form of thought into himself has drawn.
Snarls of conflicting minds his genius looseneth,
As wood and field dissolve in Springtime's fragrant breath.

58.

Thou art, O man, but half what Nature at thy birth
Made thee, — and half what thou hast made thyself on earth.
She laid the building-ground thou canst not change one jot;
'T is thine to build thereon a shapely house, or not.
To *that* thou canst do naught, — with *this* hast all to do;
Thou need'st not rust nor rest, with this great work in view.
Rest not till thou hast made right what is wrong in thee, —
And what is false and weak, made true and strong in thee.
This cannot be too soon, nor yet too late begun;
The making of a man 's a work that 's never done.

59.

Who 's blest? Who thinks he is. — Unblest? Who so believes.
Belief bestows the world, and of the world bereaves, —
Now strengthening the weak, the strong now palsying,
A beggar this it makes, the other makes a king.

Earth ministers to Faith, yet fills not her desires,
For she alone to Heaven successfully aspires.
Before the face of God she boldly comes to stand,
And knows in judgment she shall bide at His right hand.

60.

Things — dost thou play with them, or do they play with thee?
For mutual make-believes ye truly seem to be.
One moment thou as true a thing wilt justify,
Which the next moment thou as falsehood wilt deny.
Which is it of the two? or is it both, perchance?
Or haply each by turns in being's changeful dance?
In thee the two exist, with ever shifting show;
What is it, then, in thee, that calls them so or so?
The Changeable in thee, *that* changes everything;
Where is the Permanent that all to rest shall bring?
That Permanent can be the Eternal One, naught else,
Before whose face Truth stands, and Show to nothing melts.
Before this judgment-seat be all things earthly brought;
All's true that it sustains, all's false that it does not.

61.

That thou in the same stream not twice thy limbs canst lave,
Because each moment brings a new and different wave;
And that thou too, as well, not to thyself more true,
At every moment art a different man and new:
The wise man who said this, was he, too, dost thou deem,
A weak and changeful thing, and fickle as the stream?
Nay, he was firm and fixed, maintaining steadfastly,
Immovably, that all was movable but he.
Immutable himself, all else he counted mutable,
Nor cared to think, if he might haply be refutable.

62.

That such imperfect thoughts of heavenly spheres can find
A cherished dwelling-place and lodgment in thy mind,
And yet, thou in thy sphere, so perfect be and true, —
How little what we know determines what we do!
He rightly knows the world, who in the world does right,
Though he no formula exactly can recite.

The expression only fails — he has the insight; well,
When once he has the meat, who cares about the shell?

63.

Not for the life of man — or of the age alone,
Should History tell with thee, but also on thine own.
For the same spirit that rules the warring world sways thee,
The spirit that struggles on through strife to victory.
And as the spirits that weave, with figures ever new,
The carpet of the times, still keep the old in view,
Never forgetting, as to higher steps they climb,
What on the lower steps they wrought in former time, —
So thou, when thy new work the old work seems to undo,
Feelest forever thine the old, as well as new.
When it was in the work, then thy activity
Was prisoned; now, once out, both it and thou are free.
Thou seest that in the stream each ripple shares the race,
Nor does the greatest grudge the least his part and place.

Nor of thy failures one would'st thou from memory
lose,
So it has helped thy soul a better thing to choose.

64.

Many memorials ranged around thee here, I see,
Of the dear dead, from whom these relics came to
thee.
The precious names they now with silent lips call
o'er,
And make thy heart thereby not glad but sad and
sore.
Each token seems to say, of life's fair banquet, see!
The empty dish is all that now is left to thee.

65.

The bird that as of old still sings his evening lay, —
With what strange power his song thrills on my
heart to-day!
Whence is it? Summer's days all from his reach
have past;
The song he sings to-day is grave-song for the
last.
'T is a good-night I hear, in this last evening song;
But not for one short night — for a whole winter
long.

66.

If Satan will not let our youth quite do without him,
Let them at least be taught some grain of truth about him.
They hear, the Devil, like a roaring lion, scours
The land in quest of prey, which he with greed devours.
Not so; the Devil no more — on murder bent, and plunder —
Goes lion-like up and down, with roar like bellowing thunder.
No, — like a stealthy fox more likely far he slinks
And lurks unseen, with keen sly vision like a lynx.
But how shall the young folk escape his wiles ensnaring,
If he is only known by roaring and by tearing.

67.

I do not love to read what hangs together so
That from each step, perforce, on to the next I go,
Where if I take one step out of the written track,
I lose my way and must begin again far back.
I love that reading best which, open where I will,
Beginning, middle, end, places before me still.

Where, whether to stand still, go on, abruptly end,
Or speak my mind right out, on my own choice depend.
I love that poet best, who plants for thoughtful souls
A whole that shall contain a thousand lesser wholes.

68.

TO THE PEN-MENDER.

Thou shalt not at my board sit down to-day with me,
Until thou first hast done the task that lies on thee, —
The weighty task to cut the quills wherewith I fly,[1]
And clothe the eternal thoughts I send through earth and sky.
For this thy mission is, to carve my arrows out,
Which I with points can shoot, at pleasure or without.
"Why does not Rückert write?" the hungry reader cries;
Kopp will not make him pens — the angry bard replies.

[1] In German the same word, *Feder*, means *pen* and *feather*; just as, in Latin, the word *penna* means *pen* and *wing*.— *Tr.*

BOOK IV.

1.

WHERE a bold headland's brow far out to seaward makes,
And at its hollow foot in foam the billow breaks,
A holy man has built his hermitage of prayer,
Though eagle never dared to perch his eyrie there.
From a bare tree, upheld with trembling by the rock,
He gazes down the abyss and hears the billowy shock.
When on the flood he sees a frail plank tossing there
Its freight of human life, he lifts his hands in prayer;
Nor lets them fall again till, far away to sea,
The ship, from rock and rift, like bird from snare flies free.
Once did he prove himself what howls round others now,
The fury of the sea; and then he made this vow.
He cannot lend you aid, nor warn you off the reef,
Yet can he pray that God will give your barque relief.

2.

The greatest Princes all, Hindoo and Mussulman,
Who walked in glory's march still foremost in the van,
A custom had, at times, to doff their state, and so
Disguised about their realm to travel to and fro, —
To learn, what they could else not easily have known,
What house and street and farm were thinking of the throne.
But by a stringent law meanwhile their souls they bound
Not secretly to hint what secretly they found ;
Still less, by sudden burst of passion and of rage,
To fling aside the mask in which they trod the stage:
What timely hints they heard, the good thereof to reap ;
And each insulting word, like Princes, to let sleep.

3.

Flatterers, my Prince, shalt thou far more than ravens dread,
Who peck not out men's eyes till after they are dead.
The flatterer steals away from living men their eyes,
And cheats the keenest sight with lying sorceries.

Whoever in his youth has thus been robbed of sight,
Henceforth like one born blind lives on in hopeless night.

4.

Prince means the *principal* man, when rightly understood;
The *Fürst* must be the first, foremost in all things good.
Be thus to thine the Prince, Leader, and Kingly One;
Lead them to what is good,—who to the bad will run?
The master of himself is the true *autocrat;*
The *headstrong* may not be *strong-headed* for all that.
The ruler of himself, true ruler none but he:
Who conquers *hearts,* alone, wins the true victory.

5.

The art to be beloved is easiest, Prince, for thee;
Thou need'st but bear thyself lovingly, humanly.
To make men hate you, that is *harder* work by far,
Yet in this very art you so accomplished are.

6.

A noble King once came, on his victorious day,
To see the stately tomb in which his rival lay.

"It is not right, our King with victory crowned,"
they cry,
"That in such honored grave his deadly foe should
lie.
Let him be disinterred for some more worthy guest!"
Then spake the King and said: "Let none disturb his
rest!
In this, our deadly foe, were Death and Foe combined;
Now Death has found the Foe, his death the Foe
doth find.
So leave him as he lies! What better could I crave,
Than see my every foe in such a stately grave?"

7.

A little Prince, yet great, here in the land I know,
Will not be praised aloud, and so I praise him low.
He knows what princedom is, in essence and in deed;
Its pompous title he will neither hear nor read.
His people from himself he lets no barriers part;
Free access to his throne has every manly heart.
He blocks not up with tolls the bridgeway to his ear,
Nor makes them pay a tax that he their prayers
may hear.
He means to show the world, a people and its Prince
Can in each other's face look with full confidence.

Oh, may he glorify the truth these times so need,
When Envy and Mistrust the fires of discord feed!
Ye greater ones, look up to him and hail his light!
How much have ye to grow ere ye can reach his height?

8.

All lottery-games has he suppressed throughout his land,
For never happy lot so came to human hand.
The fickle goddess Luck he banishes afar;
He, without fickleness, will be its lucky star.

9.

I call that people blest which, in its manhood's time,
Still keeps the memory green of young life's golden prime, —
Which, ever born again, its old life doth not lose,
But still from its own soil, in higher form renews.
Just as then only man is self-rejuvenated,
When resting consciously on forces self-created;
When he the order feels, by which, from stair to stair,
Perfection's pathway rose through ever purer air;
Feels that e'en order's law disturbances fulfil,
And that discretion grows out of delusion still.

As through full many a joint the reed its headway makes,
As through foam-whitened rocks the stream its pathway breaks,
The glassy stream at last heaven's beauteous image shows,
And full of spicy pith the cane beside it grows.

10.

The world is actual; reality alone
The real can create: a real God we own.
The world itself is life; a living power alone
Can bring forth life, and so, a living God we own.
Man is a thinking soul; a thinking power alone
Can generate thought; and so God as a mind we own.
The will of man doth will; that which doth will alone
Can generate will; and so a God that wills we own.
And so the Holy Speech, the Sanscrit, brings to view
The Self-existent One, and calls Him Swaiambhu:
The Unconditioned One, the Self-conditioning *I*,
Who, bringing forth the world, brings forth himself thereby.[1]

[1] Not in the sense of birth precisely, but in the etymological sense of *pro-ducing* (hervor-bringend).— *Tr.*

11.

Of the two spheres of life, above and here below,
Pronounce, if thou wilt dare, *that* truth, and this one show!
Pronounce Reality a Shadow in thy sight,
That stretches down to thee from yonder distant light!
Yet let thy neighbor, too, meanwhile, have leave from thee
To hug, as life, his faith in this reality;
Who thy eternal realm itself a shadow calls,
Which from the world of sense out through the vacuum falls.
The shadow thou wilt not deny that dogs thee here,
Nor he the one above that shakes his soul with fear.
'Twixt light and shadow ye alike the world divide,
And only shift the names; who shall your strife decide?

12.

"Why work'st thou at the world? 'T was finished long ago!"
This *dictum* has unnerved thy freedom at a blow.
Yes, if the world were done and all its making ended,
Thy worry over it were toil in vain expended.

But it is not yet made, it waits thy help to be,
And God for this has lent the strength, frail man, to thee.
Nature is not yet done, eternally it grows;
Her freedom can to thine no obstacle oppose.
She grasps thee with no wheels of dead machinery;
A vital spring in her art thou, small though thou be.
With aid of spirits all her end she strives to gain;
And without help of thine, all agonize in vain.
True, obstacles and bounds against thee she hath set;
But when thou clearest them, she grateful owns her debt.

13.

In waking nor in dream canst thou to God attain;
In space, in thought's vast realm, thou seekest Him in vain.
Across the bounds of thought thy spirit cannot stride,
Only within the bounds look o'er to the other side;
And as thine eye discerns what doth thy grasp elude,
Thy higher sense may soar where thought can ne'er intrude,

14.

First, Nature builds the house of flesh with doors of sense;
The Spirit, a stranger child new-born there, looks out thence.
He finds all household goods, at pleasure uses all;
And when he leaves the house, to pieces it will fall.
Yet the great Architect still builds new homes of rest,
And to these earthly inns allures the heavenly guest.

15.

O fountain, when thy streams have bathed our garden round,
Then to our neighbor's flow and cheer his thirsty ground.
Because o'er yonder hill the light of morning gleams,
Lo, the proud mountain boasts, from him the glory beams;
Nor let the sun take pride that he the world illumes,
For from a hidden fount his rosy radiance blooms.
The teacher whom thou heard'st, he too, was some one's hearer;
To the first teacher he is only one step nearer.

Not that hast most success, which taxed the toil-worn
brow;
The liveliest growth is that which comes, one knows
not how.
So day and night take turns, because both evening
dew
Our life requires by turns, and morning sunlight
too.
So too the bird, each night his daily songs forgetting,
Each morning with new zest is heard those songs
repeating.
Memory grows dim, that I once sang the selfsame
things,
And in my heart the old song with a new music
rings.

16.

Play-actress Nature takes the stage in every part
That can deceive the mind and captivate the heart,
And when she finds each mask transparent to man's
eyes,
She then steps back ashamed, and all illusion flies.

17.

The world's imperfectness dost thou so take to heart,
And ask its cause? It is that thou imperfect art.

If thou wert perfect, then the world would be so too,
Its imperfection then would vanish from thy view.
Only with thee to be made perfect is her mind,
And thou upon this road art still so far behind.
Thank her, that she with thee will keep an even pace,
And speed thee that she too may prosper in the race.

18.

Thou too art counted in; God's number would not be
Filled up,—it still would want a cipher without thee.
True, the great reckoning 's made, even if thou countest naught,
And yet thou art thyself into the reckoning brought.
Yes, thou art reckoned *on* in many forms and ways;
Into those greater rings thy little circle plays.
From evil and defect the world redeemed would be
To beauty and to good, and thou must help it free.
From evil and defect deliver thou thy heart;
To make worlds fair and good so shalt thou do thy part.

19.

Dependent on the world deem not thyself to be;
Yet let the world's just rights have due respect from thee.

Thou livest not alone, the world being dead; nor yet
Does it live, thou being dead; ye are two lives offset.
Whether as man and wife together ye are mated,
Or thou the female soul, the world's the man-soul rated;
Whether thou say'st the world begat itself in thee,
Or whether in the world thy image thou dost see;
So wilt thou *here*, as man, the world's wheel-work control,
And the world's mystery, *there*, ripen in silent soul.
Then bard and hero, work unenvying, side by side;
Through both, in differing ways, the world is glorified.

20.

To see the vanity of this world is not hard,
On all sides the plain truth is forced on thy regard.
But 't is the better truth alone can make thee free:
In this vain world, thy life — that is not vanity.
The vanity of things thou in thyself must learn,
Thy higher destiny in clearness to discern.
Not thy most modest wants the world can satisfy,
Till from the world to heaven thy soul has learned to fly.
Gladly wilt thou forgive the world its vanity,
When for thy heavenward leap the springboard it can be.

21.

World, art thou made for me? World, am I made for thee?
I counted thee for spoil, for spoil thou reckonest me.
What time I thought to seize and carry thee away,
Lo, I discerned that thou hadst seized me as thy prey.
Of all I took from thee, naught can I now restore;
Naught thou hast won from me can I demand once more.
From me thou keep'st back naught, I keep back naught from thee;
I for the world am made, the world is made for me.

22.

What ends, O heart, the strife that rends thyself from thee?
The fear of God alone which from all fear sets free:
Fear of the world, its frown, its venom, and its sting,
From fear of thine own self, of snares most torturing.
Untroubled by thyself, naught else can trouble thee;
Belonging to the Lord alone can make thee free.
Blest lot! before one Lord, not many, to bow down,
One who with glory can his lowliest servants crown!

23.

Fair world of God, how full of children of the light!
A field of blooming flowers, that glow in beauty bright.
And what thou art in life and deed, and in thy heart,
O feel how thou, thereby, a flower-companion art.
So bloom thou too and fade, thy life a perfumed breath;
And for a wreath when plucked, dread not the flower's fair death.

24.

How many a man complains, the world misreads him quite;
But has he haply learned to read himself aright?
If thou know'st not thyself, how know'st thou my mistake?
Would'st thou not be misjudged, thine own acquaintance make.

25.

Whoso controls himself, the outer world controls,
For that is evermore a mirror of the soul's.
Whoso commands himself, a monarch's power defies,
For in the outer world alone *his* empire lies.

Condition thee he may, and gird with limitation,
Submission of thy soul comes not at his dictation.
He has no power to touch thine own imperial sway.
Thou gladly lettest *him* have his imperious way,
Just as thou let'st the storm's, the lightning's wing, sweep past;
Bridle thou thine own self! The world's rein God holds fast!

26.

Uneasy is the world, uneasy is the heart,
And each to each doth new uneasiness impart.
In heaven alone is rest, in heaven alone is peace.
Oh, from the world and self to part and find release!
Come, Peace of God, breathe out the tempest from my breast!
The turmoil of the world baptize into thy rest!

27.

Man, buried in himself, cannot the world control;
Surrendered to the world, he loses his own soul.
Give thyself up to it, then take thyself again;
So only canst thou joy and happiness attain.
Like to the body's breath the spirit's breath must be;
Warm from the lungs it goes, fresh it comes back to thee.

28.

The World and I wage war; in God the strife is o'er;
For World and I in God are one forevermore.
Against wild beasts without thou fencest in thy ground;
Meanwhile thy inner field without defence is found.
No satisfaction is to passion satisfying,
The peace of love alone conquers by pacifying.
To war and strife have ye full oft perverted wit;
But note, a peaceful vein also belongs to it.

29.

Freedom and Peace — twin sounds! — through conflict come to life;
The bud of Peace blooms forth from blood of Freedom's strife.
True Liberty, O man, from Nature sets thee free, —
From thine own nature, not the Eternal circling thee.
With Liberty itself Nature is not at war,
But thou, self-warring, mak'st the heavenly beings jar.
Thy peace alone can make the heavenly ones agree.
When in thee Beauty weds Nature and Liberty.

30.

"Thou whom I heard complain, thou wast not satisfied,
Art thou so now, since now thy voice of plaint has died?"
I am not satisfied, yet am content to know,
No satisfaction can be tasted here below.

31.

Travelling along the track the caravans passed o'er,
Not far from Caucasus, I reached the Caspian shore,
And learned upon the plains of Baku how the powers
Of Wizard Nature taught fire-worship to the Giaours.
A half-mile from the town, there lies beneath the mountain,
In that rich naphtha land the richest naphtha fountain.
There a broad circle spreads, in midst of which I saw
Bloom in perpetual flames the holy Ateschgah.
And a Parsee, my guide, explained, at my desire,
Ateschgah signified, in Persian, *house of fire.*
The holy flame blooms up in blue and yellow light,
A lovely glow by day, a wondrous show by night.

In huts grouped round these flames a peaceful race of Guebers
Long time have dwelt, and there pursue their quiet labors.
The kindly fire has well its worshippers rewarded,
And pleasant winter homes without their pains accorded.
A house, with roof and walls of well-shaped stones, is found
Awaiting each one's choice, where'er he finds his ground.
The builders need not there for house-lots come to blows;
At pleasure on all sides the ring of houses grows;
For everywhere alike streams upward from the earth
The holy fire, and makes each house itself a hearth.
Covering the basement floor, a clay concrete you see
Between the inhabitant and his divinity.
Yet openings there are left, where, from within the earth,
The elemental force, entreated, may come forth
You thrust into the chink a reed encased in clay,
And at your pleasure guide the fire-spirit's way.
Wherever in the house the reed's clay mouth you turn,
Touched by a spark the gas with lovely light will burn.

Without or cost or care, you have year after year
An ever-burning lamp, convenient, clean, and clear.
So have I seen, enringed with floating, soft reed-lights,
The linen-weavers weave all through the livelong nights.
But if one wish, perchance, coffee or meats to boil,
Another chink sends up a flame of blazing oil, —
A flame than which no wood or coal fire burns more clear,
As good as either one, and not by far so dear.
'T is a self-kindling fire and burns on at one's will,
And quietly goes out, when bidden to be still.
From the least chink it streams forth with the greatest might,
And, from restraint once freed, grows to the tallest height.
I 've seen it, from a mouth two inches wide, stream through
And rise at first three feet, and sink at last to two.
When thou hast done with it, thou needest but a light
Wave of a fan; and lo! it smiles and sinks from sight.[1]
Its subterranean house it seeks again: the door
Thou closest; and it dwells in stillness as before.

[1] "They never blow out a light, because their breath is thought to pollute it." — *Tr.*

Then does its warmth alone proof of its presence give,
For there all winter long with open doors they live.
This is but one of all the forms the Fire-sprite takes;
A second, of its power, proof more resplendent makes.
As, an inflammable thing, within the house it sleeps;
So, an unburning fire, along the fields it sweeps.
Oft in September, when the warm autumnal rain
Freshens the evening air, the Sprite is there again.
Then far and wide where'er the eye can reach, the land
Heaves like a tossing sea of fire on every hand.
Ofttimes the fiery sea, in monstrous billows rolled,
Pours masses down the hills that scarce the vales can hold.
Then, in October, when the moon illumes the night,
The western ridges all laugh with a blue firelight;
But when the night is thick, a many-colored sparkling
Darts glimmering round the fields, and all the hills lie darkling.
Myself, with such a fire enwrapt, I saw at night
The caravan's whole camp filled with the wondrous light;

So that a sudden fright on mule and camel fell,
And fear even touched the men, who knew the cause
full well.
We knew it was but show, yet did the show appear
In shape so palpable, we could not choose but fear.
Not one dry stalk was singed, where the strange fire
swept through,
Nor on the dew-besprent was dried one drop of dew.
Upon the tops alone, the flames seemed flitting round,
Which had with blossoms been, and would again be
crowned;
As if this Autumn-play of fire meant either thing,
The Summer's after-play or prelude of the Spring.
We strode among the flames, as through the golden
grain
When the tall harvest heaves, a billowy, murmuring
main.
Even amidst the glow no warmth we felt that night,
So mild a fire the Lord's omnipotence can light.
It was not warmth we felt, but only a mild glow
Of wonder at the might which worked such tender
show.
This was the second form the wondrous Fire-sprite
wore;
But the most beauteous show, the third still held
in store.

When, above ground, no more one wandering flame is seen,
But each works on below, behind its earthly screen;
Then, in the Springtime, lo! in colors thousand-fold,
The flames like roses break spontaneous from the mold.
And hence the name by which the region is well known:
Rose-paradise, — fit name, all who have seen it own.
All who have seen it own, with wonder and with praise,
How to God's glory there the lovely rose-fires blaze.
Yellow-blue naphtha, He transfigures to cheek-red,
And even by brimstone-steam, the rose's breath is fed.[1]
I brought away the rose; it faded long ago;
Yet the extinguished spark still makes devotion's glow.

32.

The holy Veda when thou readest in the night
By lamplight, see that thou tend carefully the light,
That it may not burn dim nor flicker nor yet flare,
And so disturb thy sense with fitful gloom and glare.

[1] "It burns with a yellowish white flame, and explodes when mixed with atmospheric air, which are properties of carburetted hydrogen gas." — *Tr.*

And place before the light a screen, that there may come
No breath of air to stir its equilibrium;
Nor fly, night-butterfly, nor any wingèd thing,
Attracted by thy light, therein may singe his wing.
For while thou think'st on Him who being gave to all,
Not for that cause one life should perish, howe'er small.
Sure, consecrated flame to death should never bring,
Nor lead astray one blind, unconsecrated thing.

33.

The holy Veda if with profit thou wilt read,
Thy soul and sense must be from all disturbance freed.
In a clean quiet place thou first must fix thy seat,
Where flowers perfume and trees o'ershadow thy retreat;
Where glassy waters lave a green and grassy shore,
Where cooling breezes wave, but never storm-winds roar;
Where no shrill note of bird, no wild beast's muttering moan,
Nor Echo's voice is heard, nor faintest human tone.

Read only while the air's calm balance is unstirred;
But cease thy reading when the thunder speaks its word,
When the rain patters down, when the storms brew at night,
When flickers in the wind thy watch-lamp's trembling light.
Then only when the flame burns to the top unbent,
Profound devotion finds its proper element.
When from the well-fed wick the light's glance upward turns,
The soul, from earthly things abstracted, heavenward yearns.
Yet when loud Nature sounds God's praises in thy ear,
The Scripture's voice is hushed, which mind alone can hear.

34.

The holy Veda holds God's Word revealed to men;
But where is kept the key to unlock its meaning then?
'T is in the Ved itself, which, clear to the clear eye,
Out of itself explains itself sufficingly.
So ever did God's Word its own clear sense unfold,
Only the speech in which it speaks is now grown old.

Thou canst not understand, till thou translatest it;
And who shall say if thou hast the true meaning hit?
So, for interpreting aright the sacred page,
A holy office seems required from age to age.
But who, then, can and dare this holy weight uplift,
Nor fear with earthly touch to soil the heavenly gift?
To sit in judgment here a race of Scribes aspire,
But, Reason, we to thee appeal as our umpire;
And he who has no mind to follow her decisions,
Must be content to take irrational expositions.

35.

They who cannot agree must just avoid each other;
Each one is free to choose his company, my brother.
He who agrees with few has an unhappy case,
For it is hard to escape all contact with our race;
But wretched he who hates all men's society,
And with his only chum, *himself*, cannot agree.

36.

Science demands a soul of clear and cheerful mood,
Glad of its own good heart and blessing the All-good.
A heart whose sun went down in clouds of sullenness,
Science can never cure, but only penances.

37.

Attentiveness, my son, I recommend to thee, —
In what thy mind is on, with all thy soul to be.
Thinking of other things than what thy teacher says,
Thou but half hear'st his word, and nothing by thee stays.
But *thou* hast nothing else to think of, happily,
And undividedly canst give thy mind to me.
This one advantage has the boy above the man,
Whom his own thoughts will still beset, do what he can.
So many side-thoughts, while he listens, fill his head,
He cannot fully hear one word of what is said.

38.

Yawning, dear son, indeed, is quite involuntary,
Yet to unlearn the trick, for thee, is necessary.
I never yet observed that, when thou hadst before thee
Any good thing to eat, a yawning fit came o'er thee;
At least, if in the midst of chewing thou should'st stop
To yawn, thy open mouth the morsel well might drop.

But learning makes thee yawn at once; whereby I see;
Eating far pleasanter than learning is to thee.
Opening thy mouth to yawn, thou shuttest up thy ear;
The teacher's word is lost; thou 'rt deaf and canst not hear.
Opening thy mouth to yawn, thou shuttest to thy eyes,
And there the printed page a blank before thee lies.
The sweets of learning, sure, thou never canst have tasted,
Else would thy hours no more be in sweet yawning wasted.
Knowledge, shalt thou, my son, a sweetmeat also reckon,
Which is from the soul's mouth by yawning rudely shaken.
If, then, in studying, a yawn besets thee, check it,
And let its jail be tight as thy clenched teeth can make it.
Of his expected bit Sir Yawn will thus be cheated,
And his attempts, ere long, will be no more repeated.

39.

In all things must thou be hearty, and yet not heady;
Though heart and head must work in union, calm and steady.

Then let the head be sound and let the heart be strong;
Though a strong head is good, yet headstrongness is wrong.
Fulness of will is good, best when it is good will,
How then comes *wilfulness* to stand for something ill?
Thou learn'st hereby, my child, how things, for good designed,
May turn out bad, when they perversely are combined.
Though a strong head is good, — and better, will for good;
Wilful and headstrong — these are but an evil brood.

40.

Who is there free from care? No man on earth. Though strong
Thy mountain now may stand, the question is: "How long?"
Whoso is free himself, in others feels oppressed,
For who is blest that sees his fellow-men unblest?

41.

Those two old palms, that side by side o'erlook the land, —
Not to their native earth they owe that still they stand;

They owe it to the breath of Heaven, fair Poesy.
A poet said farewell here once, and thus spake he:
"Ye two old palms, I crave your farewell blessing here,
For I too part to-day from all my heart holds dear.
A restless destiny still drives and drags apart
All that on earth are joined in mind and soul and heart;
But ye, old friends, remain united still, ye two!
Yet will misfortune come one day to part even you."
The poet spake his word and sadly passed along,
Yet lingered on the air the echo of his song.
From mouth to mouth that song passed on, from ear to ear;
Against that holy pair none dared the axe to rear.
Once a victorious king came back that way from war;
A palm stood in the path of his triumphal car.
The axe was raised to smite, when lo! the threatening blade
The poet's farewell word, voiced by the driver, stayed.
"But ye, old friends, remain united still, ye two!
Yet will misfortune come one day to sunder you!"
That saved the lives of both. The king cried: "Hold! not I
Will the misfortune be, to break that holy tie!

In honor of the word a pious poet spake,
Here my triumphal car may well a circuit make.
But ye shall stand till storm or age your frame hath rent;
That was the evil thing, perchance the poet meant."

42.

Forth from a rocky cleft, among high mountain steeps,
A water, sweet and cold, of wondrous virtue leaps;
It flows forth once a year, only a certain day,
And whoso seeks it then, a well man goes away.
The water gushes out in volume more or less,
As few or many come for cure to that recess.
Still fewer, every year, of pilgrims climb the mount,
And when none comes at all, dried up will be the fount.

43.

Northeastward, 'mong the hills, a strong-walled town is built,
Wherein a singular folk for ages long have dwelt.
They think, for pious men future salvation waits,
And daily they expect the Saviour at their gates.
With the first peep of day, in bannered pomp and pride,
Full-armed they mount their steeds and from the castle ride.

To meet the coming one their prancing steeds they spur,
As if he had sent on express a messenger, —
As if to-day had been for his arrival set;
And if the sun comes up and has not brought him yet,
Then they ride sadly back, with looks that seem to say,
Before their lips have spoke: "He's failed again to-day!"

44.

I with my Master rode, a pilgrim, through the land;
From the fierce noon we sought for rest a tree at hand.
A tiger with fierce bound sprang from the wood; and me
An unreflecting fear impelled to climb the tree.
And looking down I saw where my companion sat,
Before him the wild beast who all his rage forgat.
He fawned and licked his feet, as any house-dog tame,
And walked back to the wood, whence he so fiercely came.
Then I crept down ashamed; but we went on our way,
And sought at night where we our weary limbs should lay

Midnight had now gone by, when a small insect stung
My master, that he groaned; then wonder loosed my tongue:
"Thou from a tiger's jaws, didst yesterday go free;
How could an insect's sting, to-night have wounded thee?"
He answered: "Man's heart has two different states, my son.
Happy if all the time it could abide in one:
Yesterday I, by day, was in God's hands alone, —
That was the better state; to-night I 'm in my own."

45.

I saw, one night, — his room lit by a torch's glow, —
My master, deep in thought, go pacing to and fro.
So light his step, his sole seemed scarce to touch the floor,
While in low-murmuring talk, an eager part he bore.
Then opened he his eyes, and, seeing me stand by:
"What! art thou here?" he said. "Yes, master," answered I.
"How long?" — "A good long time." Naught further, then he said.
But I besought: "One ray of light, O master, shed!

He said: "I was with God; He would bestow on me
A wonder of His grace: what would I it should be?
To hover in the air, to walk upon the seas,
To see the invisible, — or other gift like these?
But I chose none of all these wonders of His grace,
And was content to see the glory of His face."
The Master ceased. "But why didst thou not choose," said I,
"To know His very Self?" He answered with a cry:
"Hush! Could I dare wish that? Oh, no, no, no, my son!
Except Himself, would I have no one know him, — none!"

46.

Ye are My shepherds all, and know that ye will be
Called, for yourselves and flocks, to give account to Me.
Thou, King, a shepherd art, thy people born to feed,
And thou shalt give account how thou thy flock didst lead.
Thou, Judge, dost hold the staff of judgment in thy hand, —
Shalt give account how thou hast borne it in the land.

Thou, Priest, a shepherd art, my fold and stall to keep,
And thou shalt give account how thou hast kept my sheep.
Thou, Teacher, hast a flock to teach and guide and guard, —
Shalt give account to Me, how thou hast kept thy ward.
Thou, Soldier, hast a spear, for shepherd's crook, in hand, —
Shalt give account how stands the honor of the land.
Thou, Citizen, in thy estate, a shepherd art, —
Shalt give account how well thou hast performed thy part.
Thou, Father, hast o'er wife and child a shepherd's care, —
Shalt give account how thou that sacred trust didst bear.
Thou, Servant, o'er thy lord's goods art as shepherd placed, —
Shalt give account how thou hast guarded them from waste.
Aye, shepherds are ye all, and know that ye shall be
Called for yourselves and flocks to give account to Me.

47.

Where *Science* happily with *Essence* coincides,
The centre of the world in *consciousness* resides.
In consciousness alone thou findest what is found,
When with the inner world an outer one is bound.
Only, in consciousness, when God shall dawn on thee
Thy yearning is appeased, thou hast Him really.
He 's not thy thought, nor given to thee; in thee He lives,
And conscious life to thee, and a live world, He gives.

48.

If with perpetual strain thou aim'st at the Divine,
Thou canst not hold out so; thou must the task resign.
Yet if from the Divine thy aim is turned aside,
Then all its worth is gone, its vigor all has died.
Only half-way between too far and near can win
A standing-place for thee to will and work therein.
Such place God gives, He lets thee do with gladness here
Thy work, and works through thee, at once far off and near;
Just as a planet needs the influence of the sun,
From which it neither flies nor into it doth run.

49.

"God," sayest thou, "must needs have made the very best;
A better world could not have issued from his breast.
For it befits the All-good, Almighty, and All-wise
To make the best that in thought's amplest circle lies.
Thou wilt not grant that He, freest of all, was free
To make things otherwise than they have come to be!
But let me tell thee what I heard a poet say,
Of whom I asked about the Supreme Poet's way.
He said: "A prejudice spellbinds the lay-folk's eyes
When a perfected work of art before them lies,
To think that it just so must needs have been arranged,
And not a stone in all the building can be changed.
The building being done, true there's no change to make,
Yet to the perfecting were various roads to take.
And every poet knows, however he may prize
His finished work, he might still make it otherwise.
And if he should do so, then you would still agree
This was the very best; no other would there be."

God, who made *one* best here the way He freely chose,
Makes also, somewhere else, another best; who knows?

50.

I find thee, O Most High, where'er my glance I send,
At the beginning Thee — Thee also at the end.
If toward the source I fly, in Thee 't is lost to me;
The outlet would I spy, — that, too, breaks forth from
Thee.
Thou the beginning art, that doth its end enclose;
Thou art the end that back to the beginning flows.
And in the midst art Thou, and all things are in Thee,
And I am I, because Thou art the midst in me.

51.

While storms whirl round in thee, console thyself and
feel
That thou, too, art a spoke in the ever-rolling wheel;
And when 't is calm within, content thyself to be
Spectator of the play the world enacts for thee.
If thou should'st no applause as fellow-actor gain,
Playing to please thyself would not be quite in vain.

52.

A royal sentence comes from olden time, which says:
"Sunshine and favor both illumine earthly ways.

Wax softens in the sun, but clay grows hard and dry;
Favor does good to one, one is made worse thereby."

53.

The man with whom no fault his neighbors e'er could find,
For him a place with God is certainly assigned.
Who with his neighbors here no peace can e'er maintain
Will not be welcomed there, where calms eternal reign.
He who sows strife between thee and thy neighbor, — think!
Poisons the common well from which ye both do drink.
Not all good neighbors are who do not work thee ill,
But he who, vexed by thee, remains thy neighbor still.
Tradition says: "Who plots his neighbor to ensnare,
God will the neighbor make of that man's house the heir."
It says, too, in the prayer: "God guard us evermore
From neighbor's eye and ear at window-blind and door."
He sees clear through the wall to thy most secret place,
Thy goings out and in, thy every track and trace.

The good he sees, — that makes his heart within him
sore;
The evil that he sees he tells from door to door.
An evil neighbor is an ill thou ne'er canst flee,
Whom through thy window thou each day art forced
to see.
What boots it, in thy ground thy kitchen herbs to
sow,
If neighbor o'er thy hedge his roots and rubbish
throw?
"Why wilt thou sell thy house, good man?" the
people cried.
"Because I cannot sell my neighbor," he replied.

54.

A way has been devised by the good King of Lahore,
For scattering generous alms from his abundant store.
Each month the scales are brought and in them he is
weighed
With coins, both great and small, which in his mint
were made.
The King is placed as weight in one scale of the
twain,
And in the other, coin, — exact to ounce and grain.
Will he be simply kind, in silver it is told;
If generously inclined, they mix therewith some gold.

And so much as he weighs, in alms he straight
bestows;
Without one piece kept back, to bless the poor it
goes.
"Oh, would our gracious Prince be pleased," the poor
men pray,
"Not every month to take the scale, but every day."
They pray their Prince may wax fatter and heavier.
Woe!
Leaner and lighter still each day they see him
grow!
The princely body, soon a feather will outweigh.
No gold, nor silver yet, the poor will get that day.

55.

A haughty kitchen-pot said to a gourd-flask once:
"What art thou beside me but just a striped
dunce?
I, wrought with care and skill, do service here; but
thou,
As if sprung forth from naught, art here, I know not
how.
Thou in the sun wast warmed, while the hot fire
baked me;
I sweated on the hearth, while the cool shade lulled
thee.

And now thou comest here, for what? Pray tell me now,
Of what use thou hast been since taken from the bough?"
The gourd-flask answered: "Cease this pother, I entreat!
I cool the drink, while thou dost cook the savory meat.
Full of cool juice I grew once; now this cave of mine
Is with fresh liquor filled, oil, honey, milk, and wine.
We two, of unlike stock, still in like state are found;
Different utensils both in the same household-round.
A vessel, thou, of fire; a vessel, I, of grace;
But neither praise nor blame belongs to either's place.[1]

56.

A lambkin on the heath a sweetbrier rose-twig gnaws,
Only to please himself, for no malicious cause;
For that the rose-thorn tore out of the lambkin's hair
Just one small lock of wool; *that* did not leave him bare.

[1] "Honor and shame from no condition rise,
Act well thy part, there all the merit lies."

The rose-thorn held the lock in his sharp fingers caught.
Then came the nightingale; to build her nest she sought.
"Open thy hand," she said, "and give the lock to me;
And when my nest is built my thanks I'll sing to thee."
He gave, she took and built; and at her song's last tone,
From the sweetbrier bush the rose for joy has flown.

57.

All stations, from the sea to Ganges' fountain-head,
The faithful Teacher has as pilgrim visited.
At every holy stream which into Ganga flows,
He knelt in prayer and bathed, and cleansed from sin arose.
Then to his solitude he brings back the perfume,
Memory of God's rich grace and of Creation's bloom;
And in his solitude, the glorious image he
Unfolds of Nature's pomp and God's vast majesty.
To hang upon his lips may scholars well repair;
They hear the holy streams mingle their murmurs there.

58.

A droplet in the cup of offering left undrained,
A rice-grain, from the feast of offering that remained,
An ash-grain from the fire of sacrifice preserved,
A withered rose that once as votive offering served, —
With deep devotion take; with deeper reverence, too,
A word that drops from him, thy teacher, thy Guru.
Prize it not less, nay, more than do the lover's eyes
The love-remembrances of his belovèd prize;
Wherein love seems to see the highest heaven brought nigh,
But not through what they are — through what they signify.

59.

A nobleman there was — by name unknown to me —
Of whom they tell, his dog was cunninger than he.
Whene'er this courtier went to pay the homage due
Within the palace gates, the dog went with him too;
And followed in, till once, within the palace wall,
The prince's hound did him unmercifully maul.
Thenceforth he did not dare to venture through the gate,
But stayed outside, and there would for his master wait.

Then said the nobleman: "My dog more wisdom shows,
Who to the palace gate and no step further goes,
Because he once therein was plucked in hide and hair;
But I, so often plucked, continue entering there."

60.

Thus to a handsome dame a wise fool said one day,
Who at her window stood for show in rich array:
"If for thy husband thou hast donned this gorgeous gear,
Then leave the window! Pray, what use in staying here, —
Except to make us trip and stumble on the stones,
While looking up at thee, and fall and break our bones?"

BOOK V.

1.

A MANLY poesy I give thee here, my son;
The childish thou hast had, with that hast long since done;
A manly poesy, that thoughts and maxims brings
Into the lists 'gainst dreams and idle fancyings.
The childish legends drawn from nurseries of eld,
Of minstrels, monarchs, knights, and maids in durance held,—
The motley mummery danced before thy childish eye,
And gladdened thee; but now be glad it has gone by.
I 'll have thee cling no more to vain imaginings;
Whoso will be a man must put by childish things.

2.

Serve not warmed-over meats upon the festal dish;
Fresh guests with viands fresh, I to refresh should wish.

But what the Past has left is no warmed-over dish;
The fruit of Paradise remaineth ever fresh.

3.

The beaker's fairest place, the drinker's hand, I think;
The only fairer one is on his warm lip's brink.
Oh, were my book itself the beaker I have sung, —
In a friend's hands one hour, the next upon his tongue.

4.

Humanity's highest reach would my song's mirror glass,
Yet not its lowest things, unimaged would I pass;
For many by the type of greatness are made free,
And many are consoled that small things fair can be.

5.

Books of pretension will be read connectedly;
This makes the journey long and wearisome to thee.
This unpretending one makes easy stages, friend,
For where you wish to stop, there you have reached an end.

6.

A fragment which has power to think upon its whole,
Which seeks completeness still and ne'er attains the goal:
Such does man find himself, when conscious of his place,
And this desire it is, that binds him to his race.
But fragments, great or small, a whole will ne'er have grown;
The world becomes complete in God, and God alone.

7.

There 's an old word, which makes the soul to be a light,
Revealing all things else, but hid itself from sight.
Creation's open page bright in its lustre lies;
The light's own inner self eludes the sharpest eyes.
Just as the sun through space peers with ten thousand rays,
And yet the smallest cloud can hide it from thy gaze.
The cloudy veil, 't is true, melts from before the sun;
And from the spirit too will once the night be gone?

It passes, and thou seest the light of bliss; but, dazed,
Thine eye sees naught, as if into the sun it gazed.

8.

The contradiction in man's nature to explain, —
Many the notion have, two souls within him reign;
By *this* inclined to good, by *that* to ill impelled,
By each in turn is he a willing subject held.
And others thought of old, two angels, each man had
On either side of him, one good, the other bad, —
Each whispering in his ear the other's voice to drown,
This one to lift him up, and that to drag him down.
Not in two souls believe, nor in two angels, thou!
Freedom, man's proper power, thou shalt not disallow.
The contradiction's there. Would'st know whence comes it? See
The two opposing stuffs whence God hath fashioned thee.
That he might make in thee, out of the twain, a whole, —
Thy body from the earth, from heaven he took thy soul.
The body, formed of earth, must earthly things desire, —
The spirit, born of heaven, to heavenly things aspire.

Thus is thy nature mixed, that thou should'st still contend,
And to thy higher will, the lower—fleshly—bend,—
Like the great World itself, which to this end he made,
That all material things the Spirit's plans should aid.

9.

Say, what is Beauty, heart? Love's mirrored form is she.
Sore grief it was to Love, herself unloved to be.
Her tear became a glass in which her face she spied,
But knew not 't was herself, and all in rapture cried:
"What beauty!" and since then the image bears that name,
Which from the liquid depth of Love's pure mirror came.
The glass is left us still, that and the image bright,
And whoso Beauty sees, must love the beauteous sight.

10.

Beauty 's a delicate plant,[1]—fragile are all things fair,—
And, like the nobler flowers, needs ever tender care,

[1] The original makes *schön* (beautiful) come from *schonen* (to spare). But in the previous fragment it seems to be derived from *scheinen* (shine: *sheen*). — *Tr.*

As flowers from nipping frost, and skies where storm-
winds brood,
So Beauty must be spared contact with all things
rude.

11.

Of Beauty is no lack, nor of perceiving eyes;
Why is, then, in the world, Beauty so great a prize?
Beauty so scattered lies, — so *scattered*,[1] too, man's
mind, —
That seldom genuine joy they in each other find.

12.

Hast thou attained a bliss, no more thy aim canst
miss?
Exult not yet! A woe lurks haply behind this!
For, seest thou not? The blood from the boy's finger
flows,
Pierced by the hidden thorn what time he plucked
the rose.

13.

The world is like an inn; a rider comes at night,
Is fed and lodged, and then jogs on at morning light.
The pleasure of the world is like a flower; at dawn
It blooms, nor dreams ere night its glory will be gone.

[1] Double sense of *zerstrent* (here, *distrait.*) — *Tr.*

14.

What this world giveth thee, what this world took
from thee, —
Does one awaken joy, the other misery ?
For what it giveth thee, thou shalt account one day;
For what it took from thee, God's blessing is thy pay.

15.

Poor mortal's happiness is mostly not to know
Unhappiness, — his joy, security from woe.
Destruction frowns and flees, in freedom heaves his
breast;
That he calls happiness, — calls it his being blest.

16.

Doubt makes thee hesitate, doubt fires thy zeal
anew;
It serves to hold thee back, and lure thee onward
too.
The doubt that urges on, that never rests, is good;
Bad is the stagnant, numb, and soul-benumbing brood.
That somewhat good and fair lies unattained before
him, —
Of *that* no good man feels a single doubt steal o'er
him.

Whether aught good or fair has been attained as yet,
Of *that* the best of men is with strong doubts beset.
Doubt[1] gives thee wings to rise to ever loftier heights;
Despair[1] drags down thy soul to ever deeper nights.

17.

Of *things* thou well mayst doubt, whether or what one is;
Of thine own being, sure, no doubt hast thou of this.
Be certain of thyself — the starting point is here;
Then to all knowledge thou shalt find the entrance clear.

18.

Objects are out of thee — that by their name is shown:
Yet in thee too, for *there* are they to thee made known.
Thus things are doubled — seem to be bi-formed to thee,
Or split in twain, because self-contradictory.

[1] *Zweifel* and *verzweifelung* are the German words. — *Tr.*

Yet not for that are they annulled in thy conviction;
They only challenge thee to clear the contradiction.
Then say the inner thing the outer images,
Or that the outer thing the inner image *is*.
Not only does the world mirror itself in thee;
The world a mirror is where thou thyself dost see.

19.[1]

Bound to a boundless goal, beyond earth's limitations,
Thou boundest, earth-bound soul, with boundless aspirations.
The finite things point on, each to the next; at last
To the infinite rest the mighty chain holds fast.
There, in the Infinite, where lies the limitation
Of all things finite, finds the struggle termination;
The Infinite, which, bound by its own law alone,
Brings forth all things and thee thyself, O finite one!
O finite one, in thee the Infinite hath brought
Itself forth, for thy mind the Infinite has thought.

[1] The original has an alliterative ring about it, which it is not possible, were it desirable, to translate, especially as it turns partly on an etymology found only in German. The first couplet runs, —

"Zum *Unbedingten*, das nicht hier ist *bei den Dingen*,
Ringt, O bedingter Geist, dein unbedingtes Ringen." — *Tr.*

20.

Askest thou what is Time, and what Eternity?
Where does the one begin, the other cease to be?
Time is no more when thou the veil of sense hast riven,
When the Eternal lifts thy spirit to its heaven.
Time is not; there exists only Eternity.
Eternity alone fills time eternally.
'T is that in Time whose life goes on self-procreating,
True Present, through all Time itself perpetuating.
Where Past and Future, hid from sight, a Present foldeth, —
There in itself thy soul Eternity beholdeth.
Where Past and Future, both as Present, thou beholdest, —
There, as a treasure found, Eternity thou holdest.

21.

"Where are the bounds of space and time?" thou askest, friend.
Where hath infinity, this side and that, an end?
Yonder it ends in God, hither it ends in thee;
Between, the phantom lies men call infinity.

This phantom between God and thee, let disappear;
Then space and time collapse, — There, is forever
Here.

22.

The legend says, when men were building that high
tower, —
For that they trusted more their own strength than
God's power —
How God, their daring scheme to baffle and bewilder,
Confused their tongues, and so set builder against
builder;
So that they found it best, after long strife and
pother,
To separate, for none could understand the other.
And so for good and all each seized on sack and
pack,
And trudged his several way, his goods upon his
back.
Whereof the sundry tongues in all the countries
around,
Now writ or spoke on earth, among the sacks were
found;
For every one, so great the power of selfishness,
Though he forgot all else, thought of his sack
natheless.

And no one to this day, in life's most hurried hour,
Forgets the sack he brought home with him from the tower.

23.

Earn an estate, that thou may'st leave it to an heir,—
A name, too, which one day he may with honor wear.
How little man enjoys of all that this world lends,
Unless his span of time a future comprehends!
What thou hast not enjoyed, thy children will, thou think'st;
And in this dream, to sleep contentedly thou sink'st.

24.

Thou say'st: "What I proposed to yonder man one day,
Receives from him as yet no answer, yea or nay."
Thou askest: "Should I be content to leave it so?
Shall I demand at length his answer, yes or no?"
Yes, if without chagrin thou the hard word canst hear,
Then give him the chagrin to speak it in thy ear.

25.

He who for want of sense forsakes the beaten way,
And in the tangled wild of wilfulness will stray,

And then complains that he no thornless path can find,
And none to clear his way, — that man is like one blind,
Who will not let two eyes, clear-seeing, be his guide,
But rather trust his luck and onward blindly stride;
Now tear his way through thorns, now stumble o'er a log,
Now fall into a ditch, now plunge into a bog;
Here run against a tree, and there against a wall,
Till curses on his head planter and builder call;
Then says the world's awry, its ways blocked everywhere,
Because he will not see where runs the thoroughfare.

26.

Learn without murmuring, heart, a burning woe to bear;
The torch's head burns off — thou hear'st no murmur there.
Mixed of pure stuff, it burns to the end, yet never mutters;
Impure is wax or wick when, as it burns, it sputters.

27.

The wise man should be King, and on his head 't is fair
The crown, as the reward of wisdom, he should wear.

But wise men, as we hope, so in all lands abound,
That kingly seats enough for all could not be found.
'T were shame, too, for the wise, if he should be a Kaiser
Or King, yet wise no more, instead of being wiser.
Yet if *that* wise man must be King, and he alone,
Who still is wise when King, — then farewell to the throne!

28.

Once on a time Might, Strength, and Force, all three were met,
Bent on a work whereto their hands were jointly set.
Force came equipped with arms; Strength, with his brawny arm
His only weapon; Might, of liegemen led a swarm.
Yet had not Energy the trio lent his aid,
A wretched botch would they, with all their powers, have made.
Might, backed by Strength and Force, but scantily avails,
O King, if Energy (mark this!) of spirit fails.
They're of the world, the three; but Energy's divine;
If Heaven lend not its aid, Earth's powers in vain combine.

29.

No more unkingly trait than grudging can there be;
By grudging is a king reduced to beggary.
A beggar well may grudge a beggar his last crumb,
For what the other gets, out of *his* need must come.
But wherefore should a king begrudge men anything?
For naught which others need is needful to a king.
Grace is the comeliest robe of all a king can wear,
And not to have his grace, thou with good grace must bear.
But when in grudging he takes an ungracious pleasure,
The demon grudges him a king's most precious treasure.

30.

The class below reflects the upper's strength or weakness,
Its folly or good sense, its arrogance or meekness.
Wise men have said this, not for mere humiliation
Of princes, nor yet for the people's exculpation.
Bad models do not force men to be bad who have them,
But doubly sinful they who bad example gave them.

31.

One glance at his true men the leader's soul inspires;
And so one glance of his, theirs with new courage fires.
They give him confidence; he gives them hardihood;
He gives his wealth for them; for him they give their blood.
He, in his single arm, of thousands feels the might;
A thousand hearts through him as in one heart unite.
Commander and command thus feeling as one man,
What wonder if he works wonders none singly can?
Out of light dust is massed an earth-wall of defence;
What once a puff dislodged, defies the elements;
So firm and strong is that which concord's glue cements.

32.

Each has his load to bear! Shall he then help his brothers
Bear theirs, and plague himself with added plagues of others?
Thou wilt not so halve theirs, but only make thine double;
I know a better way with far less pain and trouble:

By thy example show that plagues are naught,—
that now
They, too, whene'er they will, can be as free as
thou.

33.

Canst thou no farther go, thank God for small
success!
For many a better man than thou has had far less.
And must thou still go on, then onward in God's
name;
While onward is His word, He will not leave me
lame.

34.

The contradiction Thou, whom contradictions praise;
And every one of them melts in Thy being's
blaze.
The contradictions, all that tangle Reason, flee,—
And Reason with them when the spirit looks at
Thee.
The world is not in Thee, nor Thou in it; sole one
Thou in the world; the world exists in Thee alone.[1]

[1] In justice the original of this paradox should be appended:

"Die Welt ist nicht in dir, und du bist nicht in ihr;
Nur du bist in der Welt; die Welt is nur in dir."

35.

How glorious 't is to feel, by the soul's inward sight,
Light after light come up and dark clouds take their flight!
The glory of the lights though yet thou mayst not see,
And shadows of the clouds linger 'twixt them and thee,
Thou kneel'st before the shrine, and Truth's half-lifted veil,
Gazing where soon thou shalt the full effulgence hail.

36.

Without a future life and God supreme in heaven,
Thou say'st no moral law could ever have been given.
Yet History says and shows, that on the heart impressed,
The moral law sustains itself within man's breast.
He who has stamped it there is God, all needs must own;
And He has stamped it there not for this life alone.
Still men may quite forget for what 't was given, forget
Who gave it, and the law live in the conscience yet;
Thus they who know not God are not by Him forgot,
And honor the true God although they name Him not.

37.

I have become what thou ordainèd'st me to be,
The spirits round Thee all are ranged by Thy decree.
One is preferred by Thee, another kept behind,
Yet this one misses not the good to him assigned.
He, whom Thou settest up, the world will glorify,
And he who lowest stands can praise Thee, the most High.
Thou, in the rugged path of conflict leadest one;
Another, born of wings, Thou waftest lightly on.
This shall not boast his wings nor that his martial might;
Thy wisdom gave one strength, the other speed of flight.
Nor yet let either vaunt himself above his brother;
I will admire the one, and envy not the other.
On different heights they hold each a like lofty seat;
The conflict, how sublime! the bliss of gods, how sweet!
Praise to the man who knows his power, who knows his bliss,
And owns with grateful mind that it is Thine, not his.

38.

Love is of many kinds. The Universal loves
Itself; God in himself eternal rapture proves.
The Universal, then, loves the Particular too;
A breath of love from God flows all creation through.
And the Particular loves the Universal, then;
That is as much as Thou, God, canst be loved by men.
Part can with part alone in perfect love unite,
'T is love to Thee that doth my love to man incite;
I am a flower-dust grain, and will on flowers alight.

39.

When, in its helplessness, a little child I see,
I think how, before God, such children, too, are we.
How couldst thou help thyself, if He were not, poor heart,
As pitiful to thee, as to thy child thou art?

40.

Two sunbeams, wandering forth from the great fount of flame,
Forgot, upon the way, the source from which they came.

And had they not forgot, they ne'er had reached the earth,
But would have hastened back to their bright place of birth.
But down to earth they came and worked there busily,
The sun forgetting, full of the sun's energy.
Their spheres of work once brought the two near to each other:
"Who art thou and whence com'st?" each softly asked his brother.
"I cannot tell, but thou a stranger seem'st to me.
I am one, too, I feel; in this am I like thee.
If we are strangers then, where can our home be, pray?
Oh thither let us two together take our way!"
On each, in memory, rose their sunny native land,
And homeward now with joy they started hand in hand, —
Thinking, along the way, how in the other's eyes,
What he had lost, each one had found with glad surprise.
How could they jointly fail at last to reach the sun,
Who in the face of each upon the other shone?

41.

My evening joy is not that many a song I've sung;
It is to know that none misformed to life hath sprung.
What odds if none was born? Yet one abortive song, —
I must torment myself about it all day long.
The life it had from me I cannot take again;
The poor misshapen child I needs must take and train.

42.

Full many a time have I retuned my psaltery's string,
With every change my years or changeful times might bring.
Full grave is now its tone, whate'er its cause may be,
Whether the times or age have wrought the change in me.
The times are serious now, even to the youthful crew, —
Much more to him whose years and hairs are thinning too.

43.

My youth was dark and sad, — the fault was all mine own;
That now my age is bright, thanks to Thy grace alone.
How could I dare to boast my gifts before Thy face?
I ne'er can pay my debt, can ne'er repay Thy grace.

44.

The sparkling heavens are full of stars both near and far,
And now which of them all may be my lucky star?
I wish that I could once see where that fair star stood,
And no unlucky star were in its neighborhood!
Well, if the good one's place may not be shown to me,
I'm spared the fright 't would wake the evil one to see.

45.

There's one thou never seest, though standing at thy side;
Another's always seen, removed by distance wide.

What 's farthest off from thee? Thy wish in its fulfilment.
And what is nearest, man? Thy death in its concealment.

46.

The soul of pleasure, friend, is its swift vanishing;
The very fear of death is life's sharp seasoning.
Fools grumble o'er the feast its end too soon will come;
The wise man takes his fill and goes contented home.

47.

What seek'st thou, Poet? Fame? "Can soap-bubbles amuse me?"
Riches? "Mere painted bits of painted glass! Excuse me!"
To share the age's work? "But I am not its son!"
The culture of the mind? "The thing is overdone!"
What then, to please thyself is all thou hast in view?
"To make myself believe I 'm doing something too."

48.

Thou hearest wise men say: "Enduring what annoys
Is full as hard for thee as to renounce thy joys."

But I can say to thee, with confident assurance,
In this sense I ne'er knew renouncement nor endurance.
What joy I have resigned, what trouble freely borne,
I cannot truly say has tempted me to mourn.

49.

They say, and I believe yet cannot feel, that now
The poet's laurel wreath is twined around my brow.
What boots it what they say if I feel not the wreath,
Nor feel its cooling leaves o'er my hot temples breathe?

50.

Scarce can there be a good or lovely thing whereon
I have not said a word, or sung a single tone.
So can I cheerfully walk through the wildernesses,
Where such an airy troop of sprites my pathway blesses.
I meet on every side some tender blooming thing
That cheers the wintry field with many a dream of spring.

51.

If, with sharp contrast, thou the things above wilt call
True being, and things below, a mere illusion all,

Those, raised too high, wilt thou as far abstractions reckon,
And these, depressed too low, regard as God-forsaken.
The things around thee thou as worthless wilt despise;
The far-off things will seem only to mock thine eyes.
Then will the real world, despite each scornful name,
Assert upon thy heart all the more urgent claim;
And that ideal, how high soe'er 't is prized by thee,
Its feebleness will prove an empty shade to be.
Thus will they nullify and kill each other quite,
And leave thy picture void of shadow as of light.
Then let me counsel thee not thus to part the twain;
From both united thou thy fruit alone canst gain.
Thou seest how every tree must have, that it may shoot
In air its summit free, firm in the earth its root.
What thou in heaven dost see, that bring thou down to earth;
What here is built by thee, to heaven let tower forth.
Kernel from shell canst thou in every fruit divide,
Yet is each fruit with both kernel and shell supplied.
If thou hast come to taste the kernel, that is well;
Yet 't is no shame to take a pleasure in the shell.

52.

Evil destroy the world? That were an idle thought!
A *naughty* thing can bring only itself to naught.
Yet *so* far it may reach by action indirect,
Like pestilence it may the healthy part infect.
Its poison can infuse self-murderous inclination;
The wisest is not safe from its infatuation.
Here is the Passion, which lights its own hell; and there
The Doubt, which drives man down to depths of black despair.
This is the double form of moral suicide;
What world and time can do to thee is small beside.

53.

Man feels that he is called to immortality;
And yet how shadowy all we do — what shadows we!
Still though around, within, all else on earth is fleeting,
The sense of deathless life bides to the heart's last beating.
All I have done or sought, all I have felt or thought,
Into one endless life with mine by God is wrought.

My life 's a ship borne down a swift resistless stream,
That leaves behind no track, no trace, no ripple's gleam.
He who glides after me knows not who swept before;
He who strides after me asks not who stepped before.
Who struggles after me dreams not I fought before;
Who suffers after me feels not what pangs I bore.
'Mong all the breaths that stir his bough on life's great tree,
Mine, too, is one, although of that small thought has he.

54.

My son, — I freely own I have forgotten now,
As old man, many a thing I learned when young as thou.
But this for an excuse will not avail thee yet;
Thou, too, must learn them first, ere thou canst dare forget.

55.

My son, the worth of things is not the price they bear;
The common things are cheap, and costly what is rare.

In the gold-lands, by dogs gold necklaces are worn;
With iron ornaments the men their limbs adorn.

56.

Strive at a middle range thy wishes still to keep,
Nor let thy hopes mount up with too aspiring sweep.
'T is fine when more is gained than thou hadst hoped to see;
The opposite has oft proved a sore grief to thee.

57.

Of all the virtues well may men call Modesty
The mother; none has such a blooming race as she.
The mother-virtue treat with reverence, O my son,
As thine own mother, whom none turns his back upon.
So long as thou hast her, dear son, before thine eye,
Each base and tempting thought from thy pure soul shall fly.

58.

Patience and Hope, young man, lose not, whate'er may fly!
Trust in the world; on God, and Him alone, *rely*.

And of thyself demand to wage a manly strife;
Though victory 'scape thy grasp, in conflict find thy life.
Though baffled oft, thy blows not always shall be vain;
Who has gained nothing yet, alone has all to gain.
To me success was slow and late in its arriving,
Yet now I prize far less the victory than the striving.
I would not have thy bark too long from port be driven;
Yet happy if to thee full time to unfold is given.

59.

What road is that which thou not yet hast reached, my son,
Long as the one before, yet a much shorter one?
It is the road down hill, o'er which e'en now I stride;
Much slowlier I came up, climbing the other side.
I was more vigorous then, yet was the journey slower;
Now it is short and swift, yet I a weary goer.

60.

Trust in the world, yet not the world thy refuge make thee;
Rely upon thyself when all men else forsake thee;

And when the very posts of self-reliance break,
Then trust in God, for He alone will ne'er forsake.

61.

What once for all is done, let rest; but haste thee too,
To do with diligence that which thou still canst do.
Resign thyself to that which is past altering,
And thou shalt feel new strength to do another thing.

62.

Make God thy shield! Who else can shield thee in the way?
And stay thyself on Him! Whom wilt thou make thy stay?
The malice of the world befriends the sons of God,
And foes that hinder thee, advance thee on the road.

63.

My child, thy cradle-days have long ago gone by;
Now help thyself, and make thy bed as thou wilt lie.
My child, thy cradle-days have long ago gone by;
Thy wings have grown on thee, make use of them to fly.

My child, thy cradle-days have long ago gone by;
Who climbs the mountain, he alone stands up on high.
My child, thy cradle-days have long ago gone by;
Are lions in the way? Move on, and they shall fly.

64.

By suffering one grows wise — another's, not his own;
Happy who wisdom learns from other men's alone.
Examples meet thine eyes; their meaning take to thee,
That thou thyself may'st not one day a warning be.

65.

When good is done by thee, because thou hast not been
The source of it, should that forbid thy joy therein?
As thou must sadly rue so oft things badly done,
Shalt thou not gladly view for once a worthier one?

66.

The weed, pulled up, sprouts forth again and yet again;
And evil must afresh by constant blows be slain.
As every morning thou must wash thy limbs anew,
So must thy thoughts each day be cleansed and purified, too.

67.

My son, if thou hast sinned, make reparation straight;
For suffering doth on sin sooner or later wait.
What reparation then? This only, — to repent,
And feel a glad, sure sense of instant betterment.
My son, be sure of this: tell-tales are human hearts;
And not God only sees the sinner's inward parts.
Each man sees through thee, too, if the soul's eye in *him*
Is not disturbed by sin, or by disuse grown dim.
And every human glance thy shuddering wakes anew,
That it from God receives the power to look thee through.
'T is written on thy brow, that doth to all reveal it;
Thou canst not wipe it out, nor yet canst thou conceal it.
If evil then stands writ upon thy forehead, there
Write the amendment, too, in letters large and fair.
That which is stricken out is not indeed unwrit,
But for the reckoning eye thou well hast balanced it.
My son, God's judgment thou think not to find herein,
That visible sentence is pronounced on every sin, —

That no man here on earth the law of God has broken
Who has not on himself the avenging sentence spoken.
He's punished in the thought that he deserves to be,
And all the more if he from punishment goes free;
For he must think, if doom does not o'ertake him here,
He hastes to meet that doom in yon eternal sphere.
And this old sore, which beats and boils within him so,
'T were better far, were pierced or broken at a blow.
Aye, better 't were for thee to heal it wholly here,
That in thy Father's house all well thou may'st appear.

68.

Thou not my mother, Earth, but yet my nurse, from whom,
Fed at thy generous breast, my soul caught fiery bloom!
To glad my eye hast thou been ever gaily dressed,
And me, thy child, 'mid flowers close to thy bosom pressed.

Thy lap my cradle was, my dream-enchanted land;
I learned to stand and walk, held by thy guiding hand.
And thou hast taught me now to break thy leading-strings,
And for my flight from thee, thyself hast given me wings.
Farewell! May blessings fall like dew of Heaven on thee,
Whose love hast watched o'er me so long aud tenderly!
On toward the Father's house in yonder heaven I fare,
I go to seek my true, my unknown mother there, —
The lofty one, whom now in dreams I dimly see,
And many a nurse's tale of her I've heard from thee.

69.

What body has the soul? 'T is not this mortal frame,
Which crumbles back to dust,—the dust from which it came.
This the soul's body is, — the form it wove and wears,
Wherein to spirit-eyes soul unto soul appears.

That body glimmers now through this gross veil of earth,
And when it falls away, shall in full light come forth.
Therein we each to each shall be hereafter known;
The soul its body has to see by, and be shown.

70.

From faith thou goest forth, to faith thou comest back;
To rob thee of thy rest stands Doubt upon thy track.
Would'st slink out of his way? He is on all the ways;
In ever changing forms, he there will meet thy gaze.
Then flee not from the foe, nor yet the foe invite;
But if he thwart thy path, fling him aside with might.
Contend with him thou must, and leave him slain behind,
If thou through his domain the way to Truth wilt find.
Thou doubtest not because thou hast grown wiser now;
Thy wisdom's not yet ripe, and therefore doubtest thou.

Doubt is the hull in which the ripening fruit must stay;
The ripened fruit itself shall drop the hull one day.

71.

Lift up thine eyes to Heaven, 't is full of torches bright;
Child,— ever gladly keep God in thy heart and sight.
Each moment thou belong'st to Him, art wholly His,
That will He, yet will not disturb thee in thy bliss.
He wills not thou should'st live in doubt and misery;
God is not death, dear soul! Eternal Life is He.
Would'st shut thy door on Him? Through it He 'll pass with might,
And, with a lightning-flash, the show to nothing smite.
But freely welcomed in, He 'll feast thy soul with joy,
Thy earthliness will He transfigure, not destroy.
Flee from Him canst thou not, upon thee He 'll be stealing;
Agree with Him thou must, thy hand the covenant sealing.

At war with Him, thou ne'er art with thyself at peace;
At peace with Him, all strife forevermore shall cease.

72.

One asked a sage: "Dost ne'er think on thy native land?"
"Always," he said, "be sure," and raised to Heaven his hand.
The wise man's fatherland is the broad Heaven on high,
And overarched by it the whole humanity.
Has he in that vast world the narrower one forgot?
Surely, because he thinks, to eat forgets he not.
Yet moderately he eats, and rightly so doth rate
The small as small,—and not in that forgets the great.

73.

God, said a lofty saint,—true teacher, no deceiver,—
God Himself grows in thee, O thou devout believer!
He grows not in himself, *there* ever perfect He,
Who to perfection must still grow alone in thee.
And grows He not in thee, the more thou ripenest,
With growing consciousness, His mystery in thy breast?

If yesterday thou hadst of Him some feeble sense,
To-day thou hast of Him higher intelligence.
To-morrow, haply, dawns on thee a deeper sight,
A growing day, that ne'er shall reach perfection's height.
And should not God be glad, as well as thou, that He
In thee renews Himself, while He reneweth thee?
A teacher, sure, with joy sees in his pupil's breast
An image of Himself, each day more clear, imprest;
And in the crystal glass he made thy heart to be,
God, surely, doth Himself with no less rapture see.
O heart! by Him designed as mirror of His mind,
On thy appointed track how far art thou behind!

74.

The light of God hath come into this world of night;
We are aroused, and can no longer sleep for light.
No longer can we sleep the world's benumbing sleep;
Night's horror makes no more our flesh with fear to creep.
Where is night's horror now? 'T is conquered by the light.
Pierced through by light, we gaze thereon with fearless sight.

That we 're transfused by light, and are its servants
true,
We in our faces show to night's dark, slavish crew.
Bright witnesses of God's own might our faces are,
And whoso cannot shine by night can be no star.

75.

The wanderer hails the step of Night along the land,
Who comes to take the staff out of his weary hand.
If life 's a journey then, as ancient wisdom saith,
Why should the living man not likewise welcome
death ?
The traveller hails the night when at his journey's
end ;
O'ertaking him half-way, the night is not his friend.
For this, perhaps, most look on death with joyless
eyes,
Because the end of life still far before them lies.

76.

Thou stayest in thy cell, nor goest from thy door ;
Look from thy window, then, I pray thee, all the
more.
And if even that will not quite suit thy dignity,
Then through thy window let the world look in at
thee.

Thy window 's set so high, naught low can there look
through, —
Only the sun by day, by night the starry blue.
What is not seen by him, the stars will surely see,
And nothing shalt thou miss, if they will tell it thee.

77.

Heart, be not thou the grape that underneath the
leaves
Hides, that it may not be the prey of garden-thieves.
No thief has found that grape; but ah! no sunbeam's
power
Has reached its dark retreat, and so that grape is sour!

78.

When thou sleep'st on all night, thou needest not the
light;
But naught more needful is, if thou must wake at
night.
It is a true heart's-friend, consoling earthly woe;
Would'st thou in life's dark hours the friendly light
forego?

79.

Go among men, in them thyself as man to know;
Not darkly brood within upon thy private woe.

Seek out a happy man, even if thou art not he;
Be happy that thou seest another so to be.
Seek the unhappy, if thou deem'st that thou art one,
And it shall comfort thee that thou art not alone.
Seek one whom thou canst read, — who reads thee as thou art, —
That naught shall reach the ear that goes not to the heart.
It will disturb him less to hear thy tale of grief,
And speaking out thy wants will give thy heart relief.

80.

"Pull thy old house down," says a proverb wise and true;
"A treasure thou shalt find to build it up anew."
Thorough *conversion* is this riddle's true solution;
Moral perversion needs a moral revolution.
A crazy, tottering frame cannot be helped by patching.
Sound stones to rotten beams there is no sure attaching.
What boots it here a chink and there a crack to plaster?
Still o'er thy head will hang the menacing disaster!

Then pluck thy courage up, of rubbish have no fear;
What cannot be rebuilt, on new foundations rear.
But happy he, natheless, who with a wiser care
Keeps, by a stitch in time, his house in good repair.

81.

Who many servants has, servant of many he;
Only as he serves them, they serve him cheerfully.
He serves by giving them their bed and board and pay;
If all this keeps them not, why then they run away.
They with the body serve, their minds from care are free;
They to their master leave the care and slavery.

82.

What use of a great house? None, be it full or bare.
Who keeps a great house, needs a host of servants there.
A host of servants naught but heavy pay can hold,
And heavy pay requires a private shaft of gold.
A shaft of gold requires much toil and care to save;
A small house, only, I on earth, will therefore crave.
The largest house is close, the smallest amply wide,
If there a constant crowd, and here content, abide.

83.

The presence of the poor 's a mute reproach to thee;
O rich man, ask thyself: "Who has thus favored me?"
He who so favored thee above the sons of want,
Did He not in thy heart the seeds of pity plant?
And if more thankful they amid their poverty
Than thou in all thy state — how thankless thou must be!
And if their cheerful trust puts thee to shame each day,
To punish thee, God needs not take thy wealth away;
But leave it in thy hands, that, like that snake of yore,
Sleepless and trembling thou may'st watch thy golden store, —
That Poverty may see and envy thee no more.

84.

When once one has enough, he must not strive for more;
But what is just enough — to say, the task were sore!
Man never has enough with all he has attained,
While yet he thinks there still is something to be gained.

His foolish enterprise the thought cannot restrain, —
He who has much may lose far more than he can gain.

85.

Greed is a wretched guest, a little he 'll despise,
And yet much more still less his craving satisfies.
What from thy mouth he steals, down his great maw it goes;
He never lets thee eat a morsel in repose.

86.

The way in which, by use, a people have been taught
To look on men and things, and map the world of thought,
Must all be shaken up and inwardly o'erthrown,
When once they feel they live not to themselves alone.
When once, of foreign ways the rumors reach their ears,
And of opinions strange, which tally not with theirs:
At first they seek to guard against impending dangers,
And proudly fix the name *Barbarians* on the strangers.

But such a proud conceit not long will shield a nation;
That fancy melts away with growing information.
Another dangerous dream more closely presses then:
That everlasting change governs the world of men.
One thing is valid here, another valid there;
What has intrinsic worth exists not anywhere.
There 's no intrinsic Good or Beautiful or Right;
This is the battle now that culture has to fight.
This may we boldly meet with that world-wisdom wise,
Which woke the strife and set the world before our eyes.
'T will teach us that the form of Good is manifold,
Yet always in a place one Right alone doth hold.
The height of culture be in strangers to respect
Their strangeness,—yet to stand self-centred, true, erect.

87.

This is thy business, man of cultured head and heart,
To speak out what thou feel'st and show forth what thou art.
To show forth what they are, all things do struggle here
And speak confusèdly; but thou should'st speak out clear.

Thou should'st clear up for us this mist and make us see
How fair, once clearly seen, all things on earth would be.

88.

The faults impressed on thee too deep in childhood's day,
Will live to plague thee still, when long since put away.
Lo, in thy children there they mirrored rise to view,
And there thy training hand must fight them down anew.

89.

Futurity ye hold, ye hold the fatherland,
Ye hold the heart of youth, O teachers, in your hand.
What in the spongy ground ye plant will sure take root;
What on the tender twig ye graft will bring forth fruit.
Remember that in them the world that joy must see,
Which we would fain have been and yet have failed to be.

90.

My child, oh could I here, as on life's threshold thou
Art entering, at the goal an instant place thee now,—
That, what thou would'st have done, when closing thy career,
That thou might'st do e'en now, while entering on it here.
My child, I trod this road long years ere thou wast born;
What profits it to warn 'gainst serpent, stone, and thorn?
My child it lifts my wings again thy march to see;
May that success be thine which was denied to me.
What I have failed to win, thy ardor haply will;
What I have left undone, God help thee to fulfil!
My child, I dread to think thy feeble feet may stray,
Yet must I leave thee now alone to go thy way;
Alone with thy brave heart and God's protecting grace
Go forth, remembering none can e'er one step retrace!

91.

Child, learn two things, that life may not be spent in vain:
First, learn what must be learned, that somewhat thou must gain;
Next, learn what no one else can teach thy soul to know, —
That which thou canst not gain, the wisdom to forego.

92.

Others, till now, my child, for thee have watched and cared;
To do it for thyself thou soon must be prepared.
And if thou, for thyself, one day no care need'st take,
Thou still wilt have to watch and care for others' sake.
And from this post of watch a man is never free,
Of others or himself a life-long charge has he.

93.

The greater brother must care of the lesser take,
Who must look up to him, and him their pattern make.

Thus even now, by halves, a father's place fills he,
Who haply will one day to them a father be.

94.

Red evening twilight came and saw that Life was worn
To death; with Slumber's aid, he to the grave was borne;
Night followed, sable-robed, a mourner for the dead,
And from her starry eyes cold dewy tear-drops shed.
But ruddy Morning came with glowing cheeks apace,
And cried: "Where is my child? I glow for his embrace!"
With her last burst of tears Night answered: "He is dead!"
Then quickly broke his sleep the kiss of morning red.
Then the fair mother said: "Oh, might I stay with thee!
But lo! the Sun flames forth e'en now to banish me.
Farewell! Thou must to-day and every day see death,
Yet shalt receive new life each morning from my breath."

95.

How little, after all, worth saying, men can say
In that self-torment called society to-day!
As if his own ennui each one could easier bear,
When others could be found the load with him to share.
When pompous ignorance puts on the learned air,
Wofully must the wise play ignoramus there.
How seldom a good word escapes by hook or crook,
For each would rather save his wit to make a book.

96.

The only foe of good is mediocrity,
Not badness; bad and good never keep company.
To look like good no lathe the bad can ever make,
One from the other none can possibly mistake;
But mediocrity, that lies between the bounds
Of bad and good, too oft the bad and good confounds.

97.

A wise old man once said: "'T would edify a man
If, in a glass, his face he with right mind could scan.
If a fair face he sees, then let him think how sad
If such a handsome house an ugly tenant had!

And if no beauty he should in his features find,
Let him beware to join thereto an ugly mind."

98.

My soul, believe thou not what certain thinkers say,
That one, in thinking, must all feeling put away, —
That on the thinker's track it lays a stumbling-stone,
That even beauty lives in truth's clear light alone,
That in pure acts of mind feeling must have no part,
As if the mind could thus be severed from the heart!
I know not what these men have by pure thinking wrought,
But I have always felt whatever I have thought.

99.

The man who cannot jest is a poor wight at best, —
None poorer, save the man who naught can do *but* jest.
Earnest is weak that shuns a jest with jealous eyes,
And jest is weaker still in which no earnest lies.

100.

My son, when thou attain'st fair women's company,
Learn thou to look on them with reverent modesty.
Lightness high treason is against the Holiest;
Think of the mother, son, who bore thee on her breast!

This crown has God prepared for every maiden's life,
And wilt thou, canst thou, dar'st thou take her for thy wife ?

101.

When a bright morning breaks thou a good day wilt see;
What is it, now, can make the morning bright to thee ?
A happy evening works this magic through the night,
And though the morn be foul, yet thou awakest bright.
But what with happy thoughts could thus thy evening bless ?
That all day long thy work was crowned with good success !
But this again, in turn, points back to a bright morn;
Thus ever circling flows thy happiness, self-born.
Let no stagnation check this blessèd tide again;
The grainfield bears the seed, the seed the waving grain.

102.

Oft have I been cast down when all my works were blessed,
And often lifted up when outwardly oppressed.

From something else, I see, my weal and woe must spring,
Than failure or success in any outward thing.

103.

If thou hast aught within thou art ashamed to show,
Which, for thy honor's sake, the world must never know,
To hide it from the world, what doth it profit thee,
When thou against thy will the thing must always see?
Cast out from thee the thing; thyself thou thus shalt spare
The torment of the sight, the secret's heavy care.

104.

"He can do what he will, who will do what he can,"
Is a good word, but not enough for a true man.
"He can do what he will, who will do what he *ought*,"
The way to manhood's height is by this maxim taught.
This is the charm which can all doubt and discord still:
"Who wills but what he ought, he can do what he will."

105.

The workman needs good tools to do his work aright;
The warrior needs no less good weapons for the fight.
Workman and warrior, thou, of God! O soul, give heed,
Of thine own body thou to take good care hast need.
That is thy tool of work, thy weapon in the strife;
Then keep it strong to meet the war and work of life.
What folly to destroy thy body, which is thine
As thou art God's, by ties eternal and divine!
As thou belong'st to God, so does thy frame to thee;
Without thy body thou no man of God canst be.

106.

Remorse, the discontent of men with what they do,
May help them, so that they shall not wrong deeds renew.
But toward the righteous deed small impulse can it yield;
Remorse roots out the weed, but who shall till the field?
To till thy inner ground, and fructify the sod,
Self-trust must fill thy soul, sustained by trust in God.

107.

Once a delusive faith was mine, no doubt could move,
That I must live, because I yet had much to prove, —
I must needs live, because I yet had much to do;
But that delusive dream my soul long since passed through.
I feel that I have proved enough, enough have done;
Henceforth can calmly wait what comes beneath the sun.
That prop is broke, and now *this* can alone sustain, —
God who has ruled so long, I still can trust to reign!

BOOK VI.

1.

As we are setting sail upon the voyage now,
Whence thou art just returned with well-conditioned prow,
Let thy experience be to us a pilot tried,
That, every snare escaped, we safe in port may ride.
For difficult the course, and dangerous they say;
And, without caution, none will enter on the way.
Then take my counsel! man needs well take counsel here;
Yet by another's light, be sure no man can steer.[1]
Whom neither luck nor wit from danger can secure,
To him no outfit can a prosperous course insure.
The ways are all so broad, the abysses all so steep,
Who strays, so widely strays, — who falls, he sinks so deep.
So many ships have crossed these seas time out of mind,
And yet not one of them has left a track behind.

[1] Even one's own experience, Coleridge says, "is like a lamp in the stern, shining only on the waves behind him." — *Tr.*

They left a shining wake as o'er the deep they flew ;
And each that followed them a different pathline drew,
Which the sea wiped away as soon as it had flown ;
And each was left to find a pathway of its own.
No milestones mark the road except the stars on high,
And oft, obscured by clouds, these too their light deny.
The way indeed is lined with many a boundary stone,
But these thy wheel heeds not, till it is dashed thereon.
On through an endless green careers the wooden steed ;
For him no grass-blade grows — foam is his only feed.
Right, left, and everywhere is water, and to spare,
To drown in — not a drop for drinking anywhere.[1]
Thou know'st not if the way will steep or level be,
For at its will it can go up or down with thee.
What boots it to describe the stores thou need'st to carry ?
That by experience learn, unless at home thou 'lt tarry.

[1] The translation has been shaped here partly by Coleridge's
"Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink." — *Tr.*

2.

So be the pitcher *has* a handle, whoso seizes
The handle may take up the pitcher, if he pleases.
And if the pitcher has no handle, a wise man
May grasp it, if he will, and drink as well 's he can.
When opportunities appear, wise men will use them;
And obstacles, when these appear, will not confuse them.

3.

What, in this game of life, is there for man to win?
Who would not lose the game, he never should begin.
The pleasure won by man he wins to lose again;
Loss is, in this our life, the only lasting gain.
We grieve for what we lost or failed to gain, but most
Of all we grieve to think of what may still be lost;
And yet thou still hast all if thou hast courage won
To carry through the game which thou hast once begun.
I once, myself, could scarce despairing thoughts withstand,
When at my cards I looked and saw so slim a hand;
But, as I mused, this song my fainting heart sustained;
Whatever has been lost, the songs at least are gained.

4.

How heart-refreshing is the sense of duty done!
It warms the frostiest day and cools the hottest sun.
As, through the knotted cane, growth holds its upward course,
So from obstructions breaks the mind's victorious force.
Yet 't is a *fight*, which can in victory only cease;
O blessèd he whose heart is buried deep in peace!

5.

The treasure of the heart whoso begins to spend
On individual love, with love of self will end.
Be universal love the first thy heart shall know;
To individual love the magic haze shall glow.
When individual love's bright dream fades out, then man
In universal love will end, as he began,—
Love of all creatures, love of Nature's mighty whole,
Of God, and every trace of God, within thy soul.

6.

The heat of love did once my heart to hatred move—
To hatred of his hate who hated what I love.

That hatred I repent; not that it missed its aim,
But Love's pure brow, I thought, the nettle ill became.
O Love! let hate who will and knows no better way,
But thou keep loving on down to the world's last day.

7.

Whoso can turn to acts his very sufferings, he
May boast to have achieved a manly liberty.
Let thought's clear glance dissolve the mist on feeling's sea —
No sufferer now thou art, but doer, and art free.

8.

As of the body, so is there a health of soul;
Better in both to be not sick, but well and whole.
He who does good that he may just shun doing ill,
Is sick, and, to be cured, deserves to suffer still, —
Like one whose body ails, who with a rueful face
The bitter physic takes that may relieve his case.
A well man eats and drinks that which contents him — not
Made well by *this:* that he denies himself in aught.
And so a healthy soul does what it will; nor could
Do any evil thing; for what it wills is good.

9.

"Eager desire," thou say'st, "is bad when it proceeds
From what is evil — bad, when it to evil leads."
But this I say to thee: Desire desires its own
Good only, and abhors by nature ill alone.
Say rather: "What it craves it therefore will call good;
And what it hates, therefrom it will, as bad, exclude."
The contrast — *bad* and *good* — thou hast thyself created,
In saying how it stands to man's desire related;
And had not man himself distinguished bad and good,
Free from desire had he at peace with nature stood.

10.

Fear not to do what thou hadst meant to leave undone!
New light may come to thee with the next rising sun.
Nor fear to leave undone, what 't was thy mind to do;
The twinkling of an eye will oft make all things new.
Weak is the child of man, a reed before the wind;
Oh, murmur not that thou art like thy human kind.

Only where duty bids and where it forbids, there
A man stands firm and fixed, to do or to forbear.
Yet many a thing 't is safe to do or to neglect;
In these by outward things canst thou thy course direct.

11.

Thou should'st conform thyself to men so far as this:
Each in his way to take — the way by nature his.
But if it means to adopt their ways and tricks, why, then,
In *so* far thou should'st not conform thyself to men.

12.

A place where thou hast once escaped the tiger's claws
Thou wilt not gladly pass, or, passing, care to pause.
So can I never meet without a fluttering heart,
The day, when years ago, I felt misfortune's dart;
Nor can I pass its hours without a lurking dread,
Misfortune still may lie in ambush o'er my head.

13.

I think on you who once up from my bosom flew,
And now smile down on me from heaven's pure arch of blue.

The gracious spring returns, the time when all things fair
Come down from heaven, and lo! your image greets me there.
Now floats the butterfly ye chased with eager eye;
Now sings the bird that sang your evening lullaby.
The flowers now bloom, as ye once bloomed and faded here;
The breezes breathe that seem to whisper ye are near.
What you were once to me and I to you, and what
Ye are to me henceforth, fills all my musing thought.
Ye were to me a while, here in this earthly land,
Bound by a natural tie, now loosed by death's cold hand.
But that ye were in Love's pure feeling linked to me,
Assures me that ye shall be mine eternally.
That in this feeling ye to me may ever live,
Full often to my song your names a grace shall give.

14.

As not the trees alone I trained, long years to last,
But the frail flowers I nursed while one brief summer passed,—
So not the children who, please God! shall make my grave,
Alone make glad my heart, but those to earth I gave.

15.

When his heart's love lies dead, man walks as in a dream,
For the first days he scarce his real self doth seem.
He cannot ask himself how he shall bear the blow;
And when once more himself, lo! he has borne the woe.

16.

Death's image hast thou seen on a belovèd face.
That memory naught on earth can from thy soul efface.
Henceforth, forevermore, where'er thou turn'st thine eyes,
On all things dear and fair the unmoving shadow lies.

17.

A host of friends hast thou; for one thou need'st not pine.
I have but few indeed, and fondly called thee mine;
And in my heart thou still by that sweet name art known:
That to myself, if not to thee, I still dare own.
What could estrange thee,—that I covet not to know;
That it was possible,—there lies my keenest woe!

18.

My friend, now far away, how oft my thoughts recall
The word thy lips, in free communion, once let fall:
That thou could'st never bear a fellow-man to meet,
If ye in mutual love did not each other greet.
Say, has thy heart till now to this brave utterance clung?
Then the cold world full oft thy heart hath surely stung.
Yet happy if the sting to thee a spur did prove,
More ardently to press the heart's demand of love.
Yes, Love lets no man rest whose heart her warmth so swells,
Till all things that can love to love him he compels.

19.

Oh murmur not, my heart, that Love her sign should show
So late, when youthful fires have faded long ago.
Aye, were it gold and goods, comfort and ease and state,
Thou mightest well complain that it should come so late.

Soon must thou leave behind that household gaud
and gear;
That cannot come too late, which goes with thee from
here.

20.

My Master (in my soul named with devotion's fire!)
Said: "A sweet melody rings from the long-
thrummed lyre,"[1]
For his own solace thus he spake with pride sincere,
Who still so firmly played, yet counted many a
year.
But for my solace, too, so spake the honored sage;
A shudder thrills my heart, but not the chill of age,
The spirit that strung *this* harp, awhile still lets it
quiver
With rapture in his breath, till death the chords shall
shiver.

21.

Thy thunder rolls, and says — shall I forget? — that
Thou
My Master art, and I beneath Thy staff should bow.

[1] "Des Dichter's Wink gewartig,
Melodisch klingt die durchgespielte Leier,
Ein liebes Opfer traulich darzubringen."
— Goethe, ii. 5.

Thou holdest in Thy hand my fate at every hour,
But at this moment I more clearly feel Thy power.
I know not what Thy will concerning me may be;
What hour Thou wilt recall the pledge Thou gavest me.
Lord, at Thy feet I lay Thy gift to me, which then
As a new gift from Thee I grateful take again.
Life is so dear to me, as sent down from above,
Gift and remembrancer of God's parental love.

22.

Thou that bewail'st thy lot with such a bitter cry,
Must have a higher sense of worthiness than I.
Far beyond my deserts have been the blessings sent,
And I should be ashamed, if I were not content.

23.

My heart's all gratitude when I look back and see
From what thick clouds broke forth my sunny destiny,—
Through what dark wrestlings life to light and freedom sprung;
My youth was old with care, my age with joy is young.

24.

I melt in thanks and tears when thinking how my soul
Turns, through Thy power, at last its footsteps toward Thy goal, —
The steps that stumbled long, so long and deep and sore;
But will, henceforth, I hope, stumble again no more.
That, through my fault, I have no farther come — oh shame!
Oh joy! that, through Thy grace, so far as this I came.

25.

When in my soul some work of beauty hath been wrought,
And blessing, to make good the battles I have fought,
Then am I glad to think I had to fight them through,
And yearn that all should share the fair creation too.
Yet many a time I think, was not the price too high,
For so much fining fire a bit of gold to buy?

26.

Looking on childhood's life, I often muse and sigh,
What thorns of trouble Time will plant there by and by.

Far seldomer the sight fills me with visions fair
Of bloom and fruit the world one day will ripen there.
Not that I thence conclude the world is vanity,
But more than ever so it seems henceforth to me.

27.

Thou and thy fate, O man, how like the crops that grow,
Whose fortune, till the time of harvest, none can know.
How many a scourge, frost, flood, drought, fire, they must withstand,
Sent by the fitful heavens on the defenceless land!
And, when, these foes escaped, at last they wear the crown
Of gold, then comes the end, — which is, to be cut down.

28.

Fair is the drop of dew upon the blade of grass,
And not too small to be the great sun's looking-glass.
Fair is the rivulet then that hardly dares to kiss
The flower, half trembling even to breathe aloud its bliss.

And fair the stately stream that, "with a roaring song,"[1]
His full exulting tide majestic rolls along.
Rejoice in all things fair that, from the fount of good,
Trickle or purl or pour, — dew, rill, or foaming flood.

29.

One treads with feet unshod within the king's hall-doors,
For gems and costly stones inlay the marble floors.
Oh, see! The morning has begemmed the floor of earth
With jewelry of dew; with naked feet step forth!
He who at early morn can walk in dews of May,
Is from feet up made strong for all the coming day.
Be joyful that the Lord thy feet in dewdrops washes,
Ne'er let them tread again sin's mire or sorrow's ashes.

30.

We bring the morning sun our gift of praise sincere,
Who lights creation's face and makes the spirits clear.
Before him Morning-wind his herald's-trumpet blows,
The banner of his march the morning redness shows.

[1] Barry Cornwall. — *Tr.*

He comes, — a world-wide thrill foreboded his advance, —
And of his kingdom takes possession with a glance;
He from the mountain-forms the veil of mist uplifts,
And drives the crew of Night back to the gorge's rifts.
Like sacrificial cups the vales with light o'erflow,
Each flow'ret of the vale drinks its peculiar glow.
And as the flower with joy lifts itself to the light,
So in the breast of man his consciousness grows bright.
Night's juggling shadow-play — the mazy web of dreams —
Is rent when, Nature's light! thy conquering banner streams.
Stretch forth thy radiant hand to take the offering
Which the world's face to thee and the heart's yearnings bring!
Lift with thy look and stay, as doth the tree the vine,
The thoughts weighed down with dew that round Life's tree would twine.
The wishes and the hopes, the vows with tender roots,
Refresh, invigorate, and lead like summer shoots.
Give to all buds that they may blossom fair and free,
All flowers, that they may mould their fashion after thee!

And grant that like the race of flowers, all hearts
may grow,
And ever in the light and toward the light may go!
This is the only prayer we bring before thee now;
Take it and bear it up to One still higher, thou!
A mediator, thou dost through creation go,
Bearing to higher ones the prayer of those below.
Oh bear it to the Sun, whose lode-thread guides thy
way,
That he may bear't to One whose law he doth
obey.
From ever higher Suns to ever higher ones,
The golden bucket runs, to the great well of suns.
There ye the bucket fill with dew that cools the
brow;
Filled with our thanks bear back the emptied vessel
now!

31.

Come hither! let us bathe here in this holy sea,
Whose waves with silver look invite to purity.
The sun flings far abroad his mantle folds of light,
That thou in fairer robes than earthly may'st be dight.
A bathing towel soft the morning winds supply,
Which shall with fragrant breath thy skin perfume
and dry.

The waves a girdle bright of liquid crystal string,
That shall around thy form with grace and fondness
cling;
And on the bottom kissed by the caressing sea,
Rests the soft sand that well for sandals serveth
thee.
And so baptize thyself in each pure element,
With Him who dwells in each, inseparably blent.
The flood that evermore down from His eyelids
drips,
He makes a well to cool Earth's feverish brow and
lips.
The wild beasts, great and small, there too their
thirst allay,
But only in the night and in the moonlight they.
The cool refreshment they may only taste at night,
That man and beast, by day, may not each other
fright.
And the most innocent of the wild brotherhood,
Plunge in the deepest there in reverential mood.
The timid roe, herself, to drink stands not apart
Out on the brink, but lets the wave rise to her
heart;
And through the wave she'll glide with ease to
th' other rim,
When to this side she hears approach the tiger grim.

From entering that pure flood, e'en the fell tiger shrinks,
To cool his burning tongue he on the margin drinks.
The poisonous serpent doth of all the beasts refuse
Alone to go and drink, lest he his poison lose.
The wave that would from him his poison take he 'll flee;
Be a pure stream, and sin itself shall fly from thee!

32.

See how the lotus swims the pool, a thing of grace!
So is the pure still pure, even in an unclean place.
By the black wave buoyed up, upon the top it swims;
Though in the mire its root, no stain its fair leaf dims.
It changes the foul slime to flowers of heavenly blue,
Whereon, night after night, distils the kindly dew.
Blame not the pool that rears a bloom so undefiled;
On the dark mother falls a lustre from her child;
Blame not the world, as if a pure heart it would stain;
From the pure heart it would itself a pureness gain.
Thence to the lotus flower a heartlike shape is lent,
That with its earthly state thy heart may be content.

33.

The shafts of destiny in all directions fly,
Which even Virtue's self is powerless to defy.
One only shield remains,—all self-reproach to shun;
So shall no inner storm make worse the outer one.
For innocence not quite outweighs the load of fate,
But suffering undeserved is robbed of half its weight.

34.

Full many a man, how great soe'er a portion fall
To him of earthly good, may deem his share too small.
And would he soberly, not highly, estimate
Himself, he would confess that it was far too great.

35.

A sudden shock oft warns the idly drifting master,
On the smooth sea of life, of shipwreck and disaster.
Thank thou the blow that thus startles thy thoughtlessness
To thank the God whose grace guides through the wilderness,—
To thank his guiding grace, and for that grace still pray
That, softly rocked, thy bark may make a prosperous way.

36.

The pillow of sheer ease to man a rack may be;
A real woe though small may cure much misery.
I have a friend in mind, who because hitherto
No fire has marred his rest nor burglar breaking through,
Must needs distinctly see in dream, night after night,
That now what never came is ready to alight.
How happy would a thief — a fire — have made him! Then
He would have slept each night, the most composed of men.

37.

Man at the outset hopes, inspired with happy daring,
To do some wondrous thing, unheard of, past comparing.
Soon, undeceived, he sees the bounds his path that hem,
He feels how impotent his powers the tide to stem.
He feels it all, and seeks to drive it from his thought,
That in this world in vain is rest from torment sought.
Only his very plagues to such a habit grow,
The plagues of life at last become a pleasure so.

38.

Bewail not that so oft misfortunes on thee fall;
Lo, how much profit, too, hath come to thee withal.
Thy crop is rich in corn as well as chaff; take pains,
And gather cheerfully from out the chaff the grains.

39.

One travels that he may find home the sweetest place.
The traveller through this life is in the self-same case;
Save that the traveller here, knows not the home he seeks, —
Only his homesickness his exile from it speaks.
That thou hast travelled will give home a rich repast;
That thou hast lived will be a lovely thing at last.

40.

If thou hast fallen and yet it has not injured thee,
Then think: "This time has Heaven been gracious unto me?"
If thou hast not deserved the grace, now do so, then!
Stand up with confidence and never fall again.

41.

A light heart is the best life-good thou canst attain;
With it there is no loss, without it there 's no gain.
Yet, if the world is dark, and heavy is thy heart,
Haply thy teacher's word a comfort may impart.
Not the gay tulip but the dark pink has perfume;
And e'en to Heaven the way leads only through the tomb.
Dread not to seek thy Heaven by the dark tomb's low stair,
And let who will, pursue the world's gay thoroughfare.
Dread not to pass to Heaven through the tomb's lonely night, —
Dark perfume in the heart and in the eye soft light.
Dark perfume in the heart, a soft light in the eye, —
Thy way, O tremble not, leads, through the tomb, on high!

42.

On winter evenings (so I heard a friend relate,
Who o'er the Bible oft had pored with puzzled pate),
A good old gentleman in solemn silence heard
His servant read aloud out of the Holy Word.

With glasses on his nose and pencil in his hand,
He read on till—"Stop there!" the old man gave command.
And shaking his old head like one perplexed with doubt:
"Dost understand it?" "No!"—"Nor I, Hans! strike it out!"
Thus, much was stricken out, neither could understand;
Yet much they thought they could at last remained in hand.
Thinks the old gentleman: "Without much wear of brain,
The Scripture yet may be to common sense made plain."
But when they recommenced the Book the following year,
Lo! things had now grown dark, which had before been clear.
"Dost understand it?" "No!"—"Nor I, Hans! Strike it out!"
The third year all was strokes; not one text left without.
What is the moral? That, in reading Scripture, we
Dark passages should not strike out too hastily.

The unintelligible let with the rest remain,
Else will the intelligible itself no more be plain.

43.

If heaven's light wearies thee that shines thy window through,
Thou need'st but light thy torch and shut the shutters to.
To quench thy chamber's day, the task was very light;
But in the world without, that does not make it night.

44.

There came an envoy once to the Macrobian land.[1]
Amazed, the stranger saw wonders on every hand.
At last, when his surprise to a great height had risen,
To heighten it still more they took him to their prison,
Where only massive chains of gold the prisoners wore,
For the Macrobian land no meaner metal bore.
This time the stranger looked without the least surprise:
"That is a sight," he said, "familiar to my eyes!

[1] *Makrobioi* (long-lived): a mythical people mentioned by Herodotus, and located about Ethiopia. — *Tr.*

Who does not know to-day the mighty power of gold?
How it o'ermasters all, — who is there needs be told?
The only difference is, with you, the gold-chained lie
In cells — with us they walk at large beneath the sky."

45.

A flower amidst the corn, by children's eyes spied out, —
How round that flower the stalks are broken all about!
'T would please the farmer well if, in among his rye,
There never bloomed a flower to catch the children's eye.
'T would suit the farmer well if, in among his wheat,
No blossom ever stood to tempt the urchin's feet.
He 'd find it right and well if, in among his grain,
Were naught which trampling boys must crush it down to gain.
The flowers — he calls them weeds — and justly, for they are
The things that injure most the children of his care.
As a strict father chides his daughter's handsome face,
Seeing a dangerous lure beneath each lovely grace;

Only the father cares not, like that farmer, — no,
Nor *dares* to pluck the weed that draws the youngsters so.

46.

Selfishness does not mean indifference to man's lot;
Each feels his neighbor's case, whether he will or not.
The selfish man in all men's weal or woe takes part;
For that his envy wakes, and this makes glad his heart.
True selfishness is that which only makes *pretence*
To count men's interests worth naught but indifference.

47.

He who respects himself desires to be respected,
His own and all men's rights will wish to see protected.
The mere external signs of honor he 'll receive
Contented, at their hands who have no more to give.
The deferential bow, the reverent salutation,
Are to the honored man a welcome attestation; —
Not of *his* worth, which well he knows, but theirs, who so
Their honorable sense of things worth honoring show.

48.

I think upon my friend when some rare joy I see,
And say: "Could'st thou have lived to share this bliss with me!"
Again I think on him when falls some heavy blow,
And say: "Oh happy thou, to have been spared this woe!"
Pitiest or enviest thou him who before thee went?
That he is gone and thou still left here, be content.

49.

Why clever children die so early — askest thou —
While stupid ones the fates a longer life allow?
The answer is: "Because naught cleverer one can do
Than die, in such a world, so stupid through and through."
But thank God, all of *you* who have not grown to be
Too clever to enjoy the world's stupidity.

50.

Expect not in these times respect on any hand
From men, how far soe'er below thee they may stand,
Unless thou over them hast gained external power,
And canst do serious harm to them at any hour.

With God was *no respect of persons* long ago,
And with this herd to-day the case is plainly so.[1]
This must needs be, indeed, if free folk are to sway,
But one must nimbly skip out of this free folk's way.

51.

True thankfulness lies not in outward act alone;
The thanks are in the thought; *that* by the word is shown.
My thinking thanks; it is my thanks thought out to you,
Though neither word nor work bring out my thanks to view.
Else what ingratitude were proven on my head,
For they to whom I owe most thanks are all now dead.
To thank them now in words the power no more is lent;
But with my thankful thoughts they will be well content.

52.

Look at the waterfall when it is nigh at hand;
And look at it again when thou far off shalt stand.
Now it is in thine eye and now 't is in thy ear;
'T is in and out of thee, far echoing, hovering near.

[1] This sounds somewhat like Heine. — *Tr.*

It fills thy every sense, it speaks to every sense;
Try to escape from it — and feel thy impotence.
Its waters rush and rush, for miles the landscape hushing,
Which, in a breathless hush, still listens to the rushing.
It rumbles, rumbles, rumbles, — the country feels the rumbling,
And trembles, trembles, trembles, and never ceases trembling.
It steams and steams and steams, — the flower heeds not the steaming,
But dreams and dreams and dreams, and never ends its dreaming.
It glints and glints and glints, — the painter notes its glinting,
And paints and paints and paints, its beauty ever hinting.
It breathes and breathes and breathes, — the moist air feels its breathing,
And bathes and bathes and bathes, in spray clouds all enwreathing.
It wells and wells and wells, and wearies not of welling;
It swells and swells and swells, unsated still with swelling.

Though it has welled and swelled for unknown ages so,
Its well is never dry, its waters ne'er o'erflow.
The earth holds not its like; its type in Nature see,
Itself out of itself producing endlessly.[1]

53.

Look at the plant, that forth from earthly darkness presses
Up to the light, of which its instinct darkly guesses.
With its bare stem, at first, it stands in unity;
Divided 'gainst itself soon, by its twigs, to be.
But not, in either form the light it yet has found,
Till with itself it is in higher oneness bound.
The bud rounds into shape, from which the blossom wakes,
From whose warm color-haze to life the light now breaks.
Through all these steps the light the plant has upward led,
To rest a-top at last, an Iris, on its head.

[1] With all the help he could get from what may be called the *Rhyming Dictionary of Waterfall Words*, — Southey's description of the way the water comes down at Lodore, — the translator has but feebly succeeded in keeping up with the wonderfully sustained Triclangs in the German couplets here. — *Tr.*

And such a plant as this is Nature's life sublime,
Which, struggling up from self, will to God's glory climb.
Rock is the root; the stem, the realm of vegetation;
And beast-life's busy play the intricate foliation.
But from above, new life darts forth a kindling glance,
Where Nature's instinct rounds into man's countenance:
Then through the earthly shines a heavenly radiance.
The Rose of Nature now her crown of bloom unfolds,
When in her heart the soul's sweet breath its mansion holds.
The Rose on heaven's pure air breathes out perfume in death;
So die, a heaven-absorbed, perfuming blossom-breath!
The Rose, while living, breathes her fragrance o'er Love's tomb;
So live, a heavenward-bound, upsoaring Love-perfume!

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